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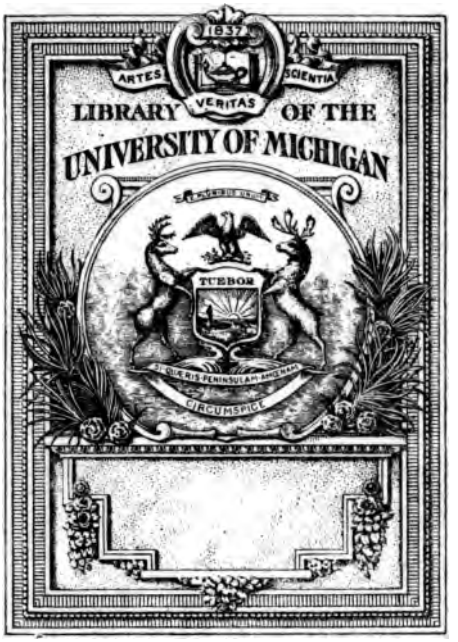
# THE WORLD AT WAR

## GEORG BRANDES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# THE WORLD AT WAR

Nous n'avons que deux jours à vivre; ce n'est pas la peine de les passer à ramper sous des coquins méprisables.

Il ne se fait rien de grand dans le monde que par le génie et la fermeté d'un seul homme qui lutte contre les préjugés de la multitude.

— *Voltaire*

# THE WORLD AT WAR

BY

GEORG BRANDES

TRANSLATED BY

CATHERINE D. GROTH

New York

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

1917

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## PREFACE

In "The World at War" Georg Brandes has collected some of his essays on the war and the events leading up to it, written before and during the great conflict. From the prophetic "Foreboding" of 1881 to his "Conclusion" as to what must be the basis of lasting peace, Brandes fearlessly and with a burning sense of justice uncovers various aspects of the war, never allowing himself to be biased.

In his letter to Clemenceau may be found the key to his attitude:

"But I would confess to you that I have a very high regard for the writer's calling. If he is not Truth's consecrated priest he is only fit to be thrown on the scrap heap."

G. D. G.

Reclus. MP. 5-7-36

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# THE WORLD AT WAR

## FOREBODING

(July 11, 1881)

. . . I do not believe that Socialism, as a party, will come to power in Germany within a reasonable number of years. Its influence will be limited to carrying out the obvious reforms of Bismarck's state-socialistic ideas, Yet this influence, such as it is, is considerable and creates a highly illogic situation, since doctrines pursued in the cellars as "dangerous to the state" are hailed from the housetops as the state's only salvation. Who would have thought this possible, even two years ago?

This does not imply, however, that any real blow has been dealt conservatism in Germany. On the contrary, state-socialism, deprived of the fundamental principles of fraternity and self-government, is by the very nature of things a liberty-sapping doctrine. It is upheld by men of science like Adolph Wagner, who began as a follower of Rodbertus and Lassalle only to end as a believer in the confused principles of the Christian state and as a defender of indirect taxation. He who has followed Germany's evolution during the last half dozen years has been able to note the transformation of the

socialistic-minded youth at the universities. During the last few years the rare "red" intellects among the younger professors who began by hating governmental oppression and official hypocrisy and by sympathising with the common man have changed their attitude completely. Their fire has burnt out, their powder has grown damp. Of the passionate desire for reform only a limp state-socialism remains. It does not differ essentially from that of the bureaucrats who approve of state ownership of railroads, nor from that of the official clergy who use socialism as a means of thwarting the liberals, and of favouring reaction under its cover. That some of these men still express themselves in the vocabulary of their early youth, means nothing.

And, save these few and doubtful exceptions, the intellectuals of the younger generation are all reactionary. Political free thinkers are found only among men of sixty or over. While the average man still is a free thinker in, or rather shows a complete indifference to, religion, he seems to have no difficulty in associating even pantheism very satisfactorily with official Christianity and political conservatism. Politically, the young are old, and only the old are young. The love of liberty, in the English sense, is to be found in Germany only among men of the generation which, within ten years, will have disappeared.

And when that time comes, Germany will lie alone, isolated, hated by the neighbouring countries; a strong-

hold of conservatism in the centre of Europe. Around it, in Italy, in France, in Russia, in the North, there will rise a generation imbued with international ideas and eager to carry them out in life. But Germany will lie there, old and half stifled in her coat of mail, armed to the teeth, and protected by all the weapons of murder and defence which science can invent.

And there will come great struggles and greater wars. If Germany wins, Europe, in comparison with America, will politically be as Asia in comparison to Europe. But if Germany loses, then . . .

But it is not seemly to play the prophet.

# THE DEATH OF THE REAL GERMAN SPIRIT

## KAISER FRIEDRICH'S DEATH

(June 15, 1888)

The short interregnum is over. The man whose ascension to the throne was awaited with expectancy for decades, with fear by some but with the clearest hopes by others, has passed away without being able to fulfil any promise or carry out any expectation. It seems a symbol of the tenacity of European conservatism that his father lived to be ninety. It is symbolic, too, that the Emperor whose name was synonymous with noble generosity, manly warm-heartedness, liberal intelligence and genuine culture should disappear from the political stage without leaving any trace except that one first proclamation which seemed and which was a testament. A few practical politicians may have found it doctrinary, but it bore the hallmark of an independent, liberal, broad-minded personality — a royal personality which, for the first time, made use of its right to proclaim, or have proclaimed, the motto engraved on its shield.

But even if he was unable to accomplish anything politically, Emperor Friedrich nevertheless used the few months when he lived with death's cold hand on his

throat so as to leave no doubt as to how he would have led the state had he had vitality as well as will power. The whole world gasped at the drama of a dying man dismissing Germany's "Major Domo"— at an emperor who, on his deathbed, showed his horror of bureaucratic insolence and despotism and his unconditional love of political freedom. Puttkammer's fall was an execution *in effigie* of reaction's hatred of liberty.

Unfortunately, however, only *in effigie*. The wooden doll lies broken on the scaffold but the living hatred of liberty remains triumphant and with clanging spurs will begin again to gallop madly around the throne.

As Crown Prince, Emperor Friedrich gave an impression of unusual manly beauty. In his white cuirassier uniform, tall, broad-shouldered, blond and blue eyed like Siegfried, he was an impressive figure. His smile came from the heart; his manner was distinguished and cordial.

Those who had the privilege of receiving a personal letter from him, written in a clear, upright and beautiful handwriting, received an impression of chivalrous warmth, of noble fellow feeling. He wrote to his friends as Hamlet speaks to Horatio.

He was intellectually free, without hardness and without obstinacy, yet he lacked neither dignity nor brilliancy. Until branded by his last illness, his personality was royal. Yet even when in full armour his face and manner showed that, unlike his father and his

son, he had never allowed the military corset to crush his heart out of place. He had not only a heart, like his father, but a heart in the right place.

There was something magnanimous about his spirit which broke through even the hard rules of military discipline. In 1870–71 he pardoned on the spot French war correspondents caught on the battlefield in civilian clothes, who, according to the law, should have been shot as spies. Upon their return to France, in the articles expressing their thanks, they remarked that German prisoners would have been shot without mercy in France under the same conditions.

At the end of the nineteenth century there was no place on the throne of a great power for a character such as his. And reaction, the enormous hell dog, has swallowed his reign in a mouthful and after the short interruption will now begin unmolested to bark again with its three heads: chauvinism, bigotry and war madness.

As Napoleon's short break in Louis XVIII's reign was called *The Hundred Days,* so this short gleam of a clear human spirit breaking in on our war-mad empire might be called the *Hundred Days' Intermission.*

And the late Emperor represented not only real humanity but the real German spirit — the spirit which abdicated when the new German Empire was established.

It is curious how blind the world is to the fact that

the period of Germany's so-called decadence, the Iena period, when Prussia was humiliated by Napoleon, in reality represents Germany's most gloriously brilliant era. At that time the German spirit first grew to be a power and to conquer the world. Everything German that is loved or appreciated throughout the world dates from that time. Germany's recent and most successful period, on the other hand, is the most barren of all in regard to what one would call culture. Soon, indeed, German culture and German spirit will be only a saga in the German Empire. The possibility of its blossoming forth again vanished with Emperor's Friedrich's death. With him the last representative of a human Germany disappeared. A national Germany, only, is now left.

Undoubtedly Denmark is obliged to show consideration to her southern neighbour. Politically we cannot have it as an enemy. Yet we must admit that at the present moment Russian intellect is much more liberal and inspired than the German, and those whom the Pan-Germanists call our "German brothers" will soon be our brothers only in philistinism, pedantism and servility. Not liberty, but order and might, is the motto of new Germany. And the days in store for Europe may be expressed in the words of the song in Vaulundur's Saga: *Hard days, sword days, death days.*

## ENGLAND AND GERMANY

(October, 1905)

The desire for peace professed by most "intellectuals" in Europe contains an element of danger, for man is inclined to mistake his desires for reality and to believe he is on the verge of obtaining what he only sees in his dreams. In politics, as in other matters, it is advisable to face facts squarely and see them as they really are.

Our press, however, invariably dismisses every mention of conflict between England and Germany as "sensational twaddle" and praises as "cold blooded and rational" every claim that such a war is impossible. "Neither Germany's nor England's statesmen would be so insane as to plunge their countries into war," is the popular refrain.

Allow me, first of all, to protest against the use of the words "cold blooded." It does not require a whit more cold bloodedness to consider a war between England and Germany impossible, than it does to consider it possible, probable and under certain conditions, unavoidable.

In discussing the future we beat our brains against

the unknown, of which only prophets care to speak. If we limit ourselves to the discussion of recent events, on the other hand, we have solid ground under our feet. And in this respect I knew more than three months ago of the facts which we are only beginning to wake up to now, in October, and if at that time I drew attention to Denmark's perilous position, it was because I knew what I was talking about — differing in this respect from many of my scribbling compatriots who cull most of their knowledge from the press and who evidently were not *au courant.*

Much of what I know I must leave unsaid, as the time has not yet come for publication, but at this moment every one knows that in the beginning of June the peace of Europe was seriously threatened. So seriously, in fact, that if Delcassé had not been overthrown, June 6, war would have broken out between Germany on the one side and England-France on the other.

It has been proved that Delcassé's attempt to isolate Germany was the cause of Emperor William's extraordinary action in Tangiers. Soon afterwards the German Government adopted a threatening attitude. In the first days of June the German ambassador in Rome informed the Italian Government (so that the message might be transmitted to the French Government) that if "France acted upon a certain ultimatum it was reported to have sent the Sultan of Morocco, Germany would march out of the gates of Metz."

Most assuredly France, at this time, had not sent any ultimatum to the Sultan. But the threat implied that Germany supported the Moroccan Government in defiance of a policy which, sooner or later, might lead France to send an ultimatum to the Sultan and to follow it up by despatching troops across the border.

The English Government had repeatedly offered to form some sort of an alliance with France, but hitherto, owing to Delcassé's Russian alliance, these advances had met with unfavourable or evasive replies. Yet before the French ambassador in Rome, M. Barrère, informed his Government of the German note, the French ambassador in London, M. Cambon, telegraphed to Paris — in the end of May — that the English Government was ready to enter into an agreement whereby the interests of the two nations could be safeguarded. Negotiations followed and led to an understanding. Some very startling revelations were made in the sensational press in regard to this agreement — sheer inventions, for the most part, and open to ridicule, like the provision for the landing of 100,000 men in Schleswig — but the rumours are not without foundation, that has been proved beyond the shadow of a doubt.

In official circles attempts are made to explain everything by the following innocent formula. England merely suggested that if a friendly neighbouring state were to become the object of an unexpected and unpro-

voked attack, Great Britain would lend her utmost assistance. So much had to be admitted after Delcassé's unpardonable openmouthedness had made the affair a matter of general discussion. The explanation has particular significance if one reads between the lines, and even more significant is Jaurès' statement that through remarks made by three different French cabinet ministers he knew of the *Matin's* sensational revelations long before they were published.

Without wishing to appear as a clubhouse politician, I would like, briefly, to mention a few facts, which, as far as I know, are not state secrets:

1. If England is to maintain her supremacy in the world her navy must be stronger than the two next greatest navies in Europe.

2. Germany tries to increase and still increase her fleet by every means within her power.

3. England foresees the day when she will no longer be able to build new warships because of the impossibility of finding hands to man them.

Certain men in England consider a war with Germany unavoidable and would prefer to have it while Germany is comparatively weak. For every year that goes, victory will have to be more dearly bought.

It may be that England, in the beginning of 1905, thought the time had come or that it was not far distant. Remarks made by King Edward during his stay in Paris as well as by the British ambassador in the

presence of several witnesses, showed that relations between the two countries were very tense. The demonstrative way in which King Edward avoided meeting Emperor William during his stay in Marienbad pointed in the same direction.

No one can deny that Germany has great naval ambitions. With or without reason, Emperor William's meeting with Tzar Nicholas at Björkö was interpreted by many to imply a closing of the Baltic. If Germany and Russia so wished it, the Baltic would practically become a German lake, since the Russion fleet was destroyed in the Russo-Japanese War.

But then Great Britain began to stir. As a counter demonstration — without committing herself in words — she sent a larger portion of her fleet to the Baltic than Germany had done.

When German men-of-war visit Danish waters it causes no surprise. They have made themselves at home here and carry on, unhindered, their manœuvres and measurements. They know the Belts so well that they pass through even the Little Belt without a Danish pilot; they are able to find their way in the dark without a light. It is impossible to overrate their knowledge of our waters and the effort spent in acquiring it. It is a question whether the Danes know these waters as well as the Germans.

England scorns or neglects such details. English men-of-war are not familiar with our coasts. And it

was the first time within man's memory that the English fleet visited the Sound.

Germany did not misunderstand. When the English fleet visited Danish ports, Graf Reventlow, a highly esteemed authority on naval matters, wrote in *Die Zukunft* that the presence of the Channel fleet in German and Danish waters must be interpreted as a serious political demonstration against an eventual alliance between the Baltic powers, Russia and Germany, in view of closing the Baltic.

# FRENCH YOUTH

(August, 1913)

Rarely has a country shown such interest in its youth as France to-day. The whole nation seems vibrant with a desire to know what the younger generation is thinking of, what its aims and ambitions are, what will be its force of action. The magazines are filled with articles and symposiums, while books, pamphlets and essays on the same subject appear in such quantities that only the foreigner closely in touch with French conditions is able to keep abreast of them.

Of course there are many divergencies of opinion. Yet on a surprising number of points almost every one seems to agree. Especially is this true in regard to the characteristics of the intellectual *élite* of future France.

First of all, the youth of France is claimed to be *young,* at last. It is optimistic. It bubbles over with self-confidence. Exercise and sports have developed its daring. Since the humiliation of 1871 its pride in France has been reborn. It is intensely energetic, but its energy is directed according to French traditions.

It does not dream, nor doubt, nor ponder. It is mentally sound and robust.

Secondly, it is passionately *idealistic.* It looks down on mercenary considerations and economic struggles. It risks its life without hesitation (most frequently, of course, in fiction). It is convinced that it sets Europe a brilliant example.

Thirdly, it is intensely national. It shakes off what its fathers learned of foreigners, and it does not wish to learn from them. It admires France to the point of worship; it feels equal to continuing French tradition.

Finally, it admires passionately everything that unites France and the French; it ignores whatever would tend to split them. It worships, therefore, the principles of fraternity, it bends willingly to discipline, hates every disregard of the common weal and every glorification of the individual or the individualistic — of everything, in short, that is most precious to the artist.

In art it looks upon symbolism as an expression of personal sensitiveness, and dislikes it therefor. Romanticism, with its divinisation of passion and its overdeveloped sentimental life, is equally spurned. It believes that the individual should melt into the whole, as proclaimed by its poet, Jules Romain. Its motto is unanimity, *La Vie Unanime.* It tends toward classicism which in France implies the finest French traditions — of the Louis XIV period. Furthermore classicism, instead of relying on the billowing perceptions of the individual, is founded on the most durable

part of the human soul, on intelligence — a consolidating force.

As French youth is attracted by everything venerable in French tradition, it is attracted by Catholicism. It looks upon French and Catholic as more or less synonymous. The dogmas do not attract it so much as the Church, which it considers a mysterious, binding force — an inspiration. It reveres Catholicism, because Gothic art — the architecture of France — the Crusades — the French achievement of the Middle Ages — and Jeanne d'Arc — the national heroine of France — have sprung from it. The youth of France is attracted by the Mysteries of the Church.

I know full well that the self-chosen chief of young France, Gaston Riou, is a Protestant, and that its greatest man, Romain Rolland, confesses to no creed. Yet the most admired writer of young France, Maurice Barrès, who made his début as an extreme individualist, is now scarcely less Catholic than Paul Bourget. Charles Péguy, the real leader of young France and in many ways its central figure, worships the *mystères,* too. He has even written three about Jeanne d'Arc. In other days he was the leader of the Dreyfus opposition and gave up his studies at the *Ecole Normale* to found the *Cahiers de la Quinzaine* which were the refuge of the intellectual aristocracy of young France.

From a political point of view there is a chasm between Maurice Barrès and Charles Péguy, but other-

wise they have much in common. The Lorraine fervour and mysticism of Barrès's recent book, *La Colline Inspirée* responds to many of Charles Péguy's patriotic stanzas.

The youth of France shows a decided return to old standards, and gradual has been its development along these new-old lines.

The first group of great writers who came after the Franco-Prussian War, men like Zola and Maupassant, hated war and wrote about it to inspire hatred of it.

They expressed the general opinion of their time. As the eighty-year-old Michel Bréal, the great philologist, said, "Those who approve of war are those who never have seen it."

This generation was followed by one which, no matter how it looked upon war in the abstract, feared a war with Germany. This feeling found expression in a most humiliating way at the time of the Dreyfus affair. Again and again officers of importance remarked that if such and such an imaginary secret (Emperor William's annotations on the Dreyfus papers, for instance, and other absurdities of the same sort) were divulged, war would ensue and French soldiers would be "led to slaughter."

After Agadir this feeling disappeared and a more martial spirit took its place. It spread like wildfire throughout the French nation. Statesmen, obviously professing the desire to "maintain peace," knew they

could count on a strong current of public opinion if their pacifist efforts proved fruitless.

In 1912, however, the foreigner visiting France found that the finest of the younger men and the most important functionaries appreciated Germany, and were familiar with German conditions. They had a decided aversion for war and sincere doubts as to its advantages.

In 1913 all this was changed. The men one had looked upon as the most determined pacifists, men who had expressed themselves unreservedly about France's military preparation and who had worked for peace; authors, whose training was half German; young functionaries in the ministries whose environment was known to be broadminded and liberty loving — one and all had changed. They spoke of war, considered it unavoidable and even looked upon it as a purifying force. War would renew France within her boundaries and increase her prestige without. As war was felt to be inevitable, it could only be awaited with calm.

Yet it is strange to read a recently published book by a young Frenchman, Ernest Psichari: *L' Appel des Armes — The Call of Arms.* War and the military career have probably never been praised as highly as by this author, whose environment, birth and education would seem to have pitted him against them. Ernest Psichari is Renan's grandson. His grand-

father, the greatest French writer of his day, was a sort of mediator between France and Germany during the war of 1870 (letters exchanged with David Strauss), and while a great patriot he was a decided pacifist. At the time of the Dreyfus affair the young author's mother, Renan's only daughter, protested more passionately than any other Frenchwoman against the glorification of the army and its traditions, under the cover of which General Piquart (an intimate friend of the family) had been vilely attacked. Ernest Psichari had almost a vice-father in the childless Louis Havet, who was, perhaps, the most radical of all French men of science. If ever a young man was not brought up to admire war it was Ernest Psichari.

And now comes this book, every page radiating respect for the army and its traditions. Its subject is the soldier's vocation. It is portrayed as the highest and the most beautiful of all, and the book, in fact, is nothing but a sort of hymn to war, against Germany.

It is a characteristic of the author's generation that the erotic element has but a small place in the book and is treated as an entirely negligible quantity or a waste of time.

There are only two main figures in the book; a forty-year-old captain of the Colonial Army, and a young man of twenty whom the older man trains as a soldier. While a private the latter is wounded in Morocco.

Both men are idealised figures but human at the same time. According to the author's preface, the soul of France is in them both, as it is in Charles Péguy's *Youth's Master.* Both characters are portrayed with sincerity but without great art. They have simple hearts and great souls. If France had many such officers and privates, she would be the home of a higher humanity.

The book closes with a vision, brought in rather cleverly, of a character from Alfred de Vigny's celebrated book, *Military Greatness and Slavery,* which forms a background for Psichari's story. The officer, in the dream, points out that France of to-day swells with something which Louis XVIII's army lacked: *Hatred.* The intention is clear.

* * *

The provinces of Alsace and Lorraine recently sent a petition to France asking that no thought of war be entertained on their account. No matter what the outcome of such a war would be it would ruin them completely, as their economic existence depends on their free trade with Germany. At a meeting in Berne, members of the French and German parliaments agreed, for the first time since 1871, to try to ward off war. The working classes both in France and Germany direct all their efforts (which are singularly limited) to maintaining peace.

Which of the two opposing forces, that of the army or that of the people, will prove itself most powerful in the long run? *

* Ernest Psichari was one of the first young officers to fall in 1914. Charles Péguy fell the year after. General Piquart died before the outbreak of the war.

## GERMAN PATRIOTISM

(1913)

Among the numerous pamphlets published by the Interparlimentary Union in French and German in view of creating better understanding among nations and to further the cause of arbitration in case of war, Professor Otfried Nippold's book, *German Chauvinism,* is one of the most instructive. The object of the book is to show the German reader that although the native press emphasises the bellicose nationalism of neighbouring states, Germany, in this respect, is equally guilty.

In France the so-called "nationalism" was crushed theoretically and officially half a dozen years ago, but in reality, it is intensely active at present. When the *Chambre* voted the law for three years' compulsory military service, mortal enemies from the Dreyfus affair like General Mercier and Joseph Reinach, opponents of the present political régime like Clemenceau as well as its staunchest admirers — all alike welcomed and approved the measure. France felt in danger, and her people rallied in her defence, accepting sacrifices it may be hard for them to live up to.

But if patriotism is vibrant in France, it is fanatic in Germany. Great organisations like the All German Association (*All Deutscher Verband*), The German Defence Association (*Der Deutsche Wehrverein*), The Naval Association (*Deutscher Flottenverein*), Young Germany (*Jung Deutschland*), German Sports League (*Deutsche Turnerschaft*), keep the patriotic flame burning and train the youth of Germany both physically and mentally so as to increase the fighting power of the German nation.

The patriotic fervour is further stimulated by the press — newspapers and magazines — by pamphlets and books. Many influential men of affairs or political leaders like the National-Liberals' representative, Basserman, writers like Maximilian Harden, generals retired from active service like General Keim, Liebert, Bernhardi, Eichhorn, Wrochem, and innumerable speakers, all conjure up and draw attention to the danger of war and play upon it to excite war enthusiasm.

One of the many German associations, the *German Defence Association,* although barely a year old, already numbers 255 local groups, has 50,000 active members, and 190,000 members in various affiliated societies. It is proud of the fact that the Government has agreed to the reforms which it has striven for in conjunction with the General Staff. General Keim claims that every good German ought to belong to a defence association. The defence associations are the

crystallisation of the German people's defensive power in their fight for their ideals.

The first point worth noting in all the theories advanced is the fundamental acceptance of the word "war" in Germany. It is apparent everywhere. The authors agree that war is the highest and holiest expression of human activity. Trousered old women, decrepit, timorous dotards call it ugly and frightful. But war is beautiful. War is the German people's only salvation. It alone prevents mental and physical weakening and degeneracy. War is the great cultural power that creates and maintains states. It is a chain in the godly order of the world. Peace must be recognised as a factor in the development of real culture, but in view of the dwindling influence of the German element in Slav and Magyar states and its disappearance in Anglo-Saxon communities, cultural progress is of less value to Germany than military prowess.

Without war and continual preparedness for war, nations grow feeble and apathetic. Woe to the nation that is not up to the mark! Woe to humanity, if it imagines it can do without its greatest benefactor, the only real test of a people's stamina. Although the struggle for existence wears individuals out, it is upbuilding, strengthening, sustaining, both for man and society, in the form of war. War does not depend on volition. It is as a rule an independent elementary force, a demoniacal power that overwhelms and runs

riot. All treaties, all attempts to preserve peace, all international conferences, have no effect whatever on it.

Which great men do the Germans glorify? Goethe, Schiller, Richard Wagner, Carl Marx? — No.— Frederick the Great, Blücher, Moltke, Bismarck . . . hard, cold men of blood and iron — they who sacrificed thousands of lives. They are the objects of a gratitude verging on adoration. While they should logically be looked down upon, according to social and moral law, the people revere and praise them, and feel lifted, carried away by such giants of bloodshed.

*Germany in Arms,* the Crown Prince's recent book, calls courage the highest expression of manhood. The book is a message on manhood, therefore, and heralds a new era which is but a return to ancient standards. The increasing influence of commerce on politics is, according to a statement made by the German Chancellor, a very pernicious thing. Wealth creates a nervously debilitating love of peace; it makes people believe in senseless ideals of international brotherhood; it gives birth to well-meaning but hopeless peace fanatics. Hence, all peace conferences must be jeered at, and the meeting of French and German deputies in Berne loudly disapproved.

If, leaving aside this general view as to the nature of war and its metaphysical and ethical values, one turns to the various authors and speakers for more

palpable proof of the actual advantages of war for Germany, one meets with the following arguments:

There is no doubt but that the Triple Entente is determined to crush us. We know, all of us, that blood will have to flow, sooner or later. The longer we wait, the greater will be the losses. We speak of defending ourselves. But a defensive attitude is equivalent to suicide. Our salvation lies in offensive, only.

An offensive war is the only wise or permissible one. It would be a preventive war, since it would not wait for the enemy's attack, but obviate it.

The authors then dwell upon the different nations of the Triple Entente.

First the *French.*— In France, the Germans claim, there reigns a new spirit, that of self-confidence. France looks undaunted upon the possibility of a war with Germany. The French even believe they could be victorious. A glance through the school books of France shows that the children are systematically brought up in a chauvinistic spirit. French nationalists rejoice because the humanitarian spirit has been swept out of the minds of the younger generation. The thirst for revenge in France makes the maintenance of peace impossible. Ten years ago the French tried to silence a man like Déroulède when he preached *révanche.* Now the word is used by a semi-official paper like the *Temps,* by a man like Millerand. The holy fire of revenge is kept burning at the altar.

Even *Kölnische Zeitung* calls France the "disturber of peace."

And the authors develop their idea: Although its inhabitants number only 40,000,000, after the voting of the new law of three years' military service, France will have a standing army as strong as Germany's, an army better trained, with better reserves, reinforced, besides, by African troops. While France has twenty-six million less population than Germany, it has a quarter of a million more soldiers and three thousand better trained officers. Germany is *called* a nation in arms. France *is* one. And France is not carrying out military preparations on so vast a scale without reason. She must make use of them, because she cannot afford to support them indefinitely.

*England* encourages France's military preparations since Germany must keep step with them, and the heavy military expenditures incurred thereby prevent Germany from actively increasing her fleet. While Germany is hampered by the cost of her army, England continues to build new warships in Rosyth and Dundee, and they are destined to challenge one power only: Germany. From all parts of the world English ships are being called back to the North Sea. The celebrated pacifist Norman Angell came to Germany to preach his gospel that the gains of war were purely illusory. Happily he was sent home before he was able to carry out his plans. The Germans believed he was in the pay

of "egotistical Albion" to fill Germany with "international poison."

Lastly *Russia*. A war with Russia now seems more imminent than a war with England. The time seems to be drawing near for the great clash between the German and the Slav. The changes in the Balkans, after the Balkan War, oblige the Hapsburg monarchy to fight for its very existence. While France regards Berlin as her enemy and hopes to win back her lost provinces, Russia challenges Vienna and wants to break up the Austro-Hungarian state. Germany, of course, must stand by Austria, because Austria represents the German element.

*Italy* cannot be counted on. Owing to her immense coast line, Italy can never become an effective ally against England. Italy at war with England is an absurd impossibility.

But quite apart from her situation in regard to the Triple Entente, Germany must go to war to satisfy her *thirst for land*.

"Our borders are too small," says General Keim; "we must create a thirst for land or we will lose our rank, become a crippled nation." Other writers claim they cannot see why "the world should be made only for the English, French, Russians and Japanese, and why we alone should be satisfied by the territory which was, from the beginning, our allotted portion." In 1871 Bismarck thought that Germany had acquired all

the land she needed. "But years have passed and conditions have changed since then. Now we must have land; colonies of our own are our only safeguard for the future." A university professor, Graf de Moulin Eckhart, adds, in an outburst of anger at the Kaiser's pacifist attitude: "Few German emperors have understood the people. Germany has become great *in spite of its emperors.*"

In fact, German diplomacy, the Emperor, and the chancellor receive but scant praise from the leaders of the war faction. All deplore unanimously what they call the "wanton and weak foreign policy in Morocco." And as the peace party also deplores the bungling of the Morocco incidents, especially the purposeless trip of the *Panther* to Agadir, and military leaders demand reparation for the Moroccan insult, German diplomacy is, at the present moment, most decidedly out of favour.

Among provocative political expressions the most decided are certain official and semi-official remarks about France. At an anniversary in St. Privat in August, 1909, a military clergyman of high standing made a speech brimming over with hatred to France, and at the German Women's Congress in Berlin, 1912, the rector of the Berlin University called France the "hereditary enemy."

Nevertheless, it may be said that just as nine tenths of the population of France wishes to maintain peace and is willing to prove this by its actions, provided it

could feel assured that Germany would not attack it, the majority of Germany's thrifty population no doubt feel that nothing is to be gained by a war with the Western neighbour.

Unfortunately France has never quite recovered from the humiliation of 1870. Besides, in both countries an active campaign is carried on to excite national fanaticism.

The celebrated author, Ludwig Thoma, a former contributor to *Simplicissimus,* an active defender of better understanding between nations, calls the sensational press allegations, "a mosaic of base, distorted lies." But he adds, "these allegations are repeated and repeated until they are accepted as the truth, and public opinion is poisoned by them, drop by drop, until it loses all power of resistance."

Isaac Disraeli wrote, a hundred years ago, that when governments want war the most abusive slander is published to stir up the passion of the nation, to rouse it to vote war credits.

The real menace to peace does not lie in spoken or written words, however. It would seem to lie elsewhere — in the great Powers' military forces, for instance. Each nation has a large staff of highly educated officers whose business it is to remain silent and obey, but who nevertheless exert influence and pressure on public opinion. An officer is a man whose business is war. An officer who hasn't smelled powder is a man who

hasn't shown his mettle, and who, as the years pass, may be compared to the sailor who has never been to sea — an absurdity. The officer's patriotism quite naturally has a warlike tinge; he is, besides, anxious to show what stuff he is made of; he longs for advancement, wants to win other laurels than those to be gained at manoeuvres.

The military staffs of European countries are perhaps a greater hindrance to maintaining peace than the assembled mass of war authors and journalists.

# THE FUNDAMENTAL CAUSES OF THE WORLD WAR

(August, 1914)

In March, 1913, the French review, *Le Courrier Européen,* asked me if I would give my opinion on the outlook for world peace. "It is usually admitted," the letter explained, "that political economists, business men as well as thinkers, are opposed to war, not as a matter of sentiment but of expediency. War is always a disaster — even to the victor. Besides, the commerce, industry, and finances of the great Powers in our day are so intertwined that a great war between them would be nothing short of madness."

Although I do not as a rule answer questionnaires, it is difficult to refuse a paper of which one is honorary editor. I therefore replied:

"A great war would undoubtedly be madness, but unfortunately very few matters in this world depend on reason. As Disraeli remarked, Mormon has more disciples than Bentham. Since Voltaire advanced the idea, Jan de Bloch, an unusually able business man, was probably the first to develop the theory preached by Norman Angell that a great war benefits neither vic-

tor nor vanquished but always carries with it ruin and misery.

"In all countries most of the population is peace loving, if not pacifist. As a rule only officers and ammunition-makers wish war. And yet experience has shown how easy it is to excite war enthusiasm, and I do not believe it will be possible to do away with war or render it less frequent through any appeal to reason. The matter is not simple, for Europe is still in a state of mediævalism.

"Besides, war sometimes entails advantages. For instance, it is hard to see how Italy could have become one united kingdom without bloodshed, and yet most Italians and other people regard Italy's unity as a decided advantage. It is not easy to see how Germany could have become a powerful nation without war between the two states, each wishing to dominate — Austria and Prussia. Austria's exclusion from the German alliance was a decisive factor in creating the new German Empire which satisfies most Germans.

"Japan could not have become a world power without the war against Russia. As long as Japan excelled in the arts of peace alone, she was ignored by Europe. Europe began to respect the Japanese only when she discovered they were her equals in brutality, and were armed with the courage which does not flinch at self-destruction and with the ruthlessness which does not hesitate at sacrificing others. Most assuredly the vic-

tory over Russia did not increase Japan's well-being, but it has given her a most valuable self-confidence and Europe's unqualified admiration.

"It must be borne in mind that if war does not increase the prosperity of the world, but on the contrary fills it with misery and evils of most appalling kinds, it sometimes — because of the barbarity of our social conditions — entails immeasurable advantages.

"A great European war would be an overwhelming tragedy for all concerned. Yet, in recent years many people have come to look upon such a war as inevitable, and some, even, seem naïvely confident that it would usher in a reign of justice. I have met with this theory in France and Austria-Hungary.

"Statistics showing war's absurdity are of little use. They convince only those who know how to think. Humanity in the mass is trained to obey when commanded, and is led by passion and imagination. It is bestial at bottom, although easily roused to enthusiasm; it is often heroic in its self-abnegation and devotion, but, whether bestial or sublime, quite unamenable to reason."

* * *

At the present moment five great European powers are tearing Europe with "murderlust" and destructive rage, while each one proclaims its love of peace and its desire to maintain it. Each one clamours its craving

for justice. While the great Powers have been crushing a couple of small states, a sixth Asiatic power has also entered the ring, with the immediate object of taking the German colony of Kiao-chow, but naturally its ultimate object is vaster. . . .

The priests of the various Christian confessions pray for the blessings of Heaven upon their armies. Science and all inventions of benefit to humanity, all humanity's genius, are now in the pay of bloodshed and murderous passion. Even the glory of the new century, the conquest of the air, is exclusively employed to serve what in former days was called the devil — spying and bomb-throwing. The aviator knows how to bombard; the soldier how to bring down the aviator, riddling his machine with bullets — while heavy cannon and light cannon, machine guns and perfected rifles, massacre human beings by the tens of thousands, and bombs wreck city after city. Torpedoes, mines, submarines, destroy the marvellously equipped warships and their crews.

Blood cries out to Heaven. Hell spreads over the earth; it crackles in the air, roars and rages on the sea.

Only one Power whose participation was expected has prudently remained outside. Italy seized the insignificant pretext that Germany declared war instead of waiting for a declaration from mobilising Russia, to leave her allies in the lurch. After having reaped every possible advantage from the Triple Alliance

(Tripolis, Rhodes), Italy's leading men deserted at the decisive moment.

In a sense this was not surprising. Machiavelli was an Italian. It is not surprising in another sense, for public sentiment in Italy was decidedly anti-Austrian. Besides, after England joined the Triple Entente nothing else could be expected. In August, 1913, I wrote: "Italy cannot be counted on. With her immense coast line to guard, Italy as an ally against Great Britain is inconceivable."

Like the other Powers, Italy has her own ends in view, and hopes to see her neutrality rewarded by Trieste.

* * *

Since 1870, and until very recently, France wanted nothing but peace. The defeat of that year convinced the people of Germany's military superiority, and even thirty years afterwards their belief in it was so great that at the time of the Dreyfus affair French generals and men of high standing declared that war with Germany would be fatal to France.

In 1912 a change had crept into the French attitude, however. Confidence in the army had been restored. People spoke with assurance of the army's equipment and France's preparedness for war; in many circles the French army was even considered capable of challenging Germany's. Germany's actions at Agadir had caused the greatest resentment in France, and the

French press frequently hinted that just as the army created by Frederick the Great of Prussia was completely destroyed by Napoleon forty years later, so William I's army would be destroyed now. Yet in 1912 the intellectual *élite* of France was still entirely pacifist. First of all, for purely humanitarian reasons. War was looked upon as barbarous. Besides, in these circles, many were tied by bonds of personal or artistic sympathy to Germans, and many, familiar with the civil administration of France, had little confidence in her military organisation.

In 1913, however, another change had taken place. Belief in the maintenance of peace seemed to have vanished. War was inevitable — why not look facts in the face? Why have it hanging over like a threatening cloud? Even as high an authority as the president of the Seine Council, who a year before had believed in peace, now foresaw war without regret. Even the author who knew and understood Germany better than any one else, Romain Rolland, approved of war and awaited it with confidence.

A cabinet officer, whose family and associations are reputed for their radicalism and passionate anti-militaristic tendencies, said to me, "My greatest desire is to live to shoulder my rifle and start for the front." One of the directors in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a man who selects the candidates for the various embassies and consulates, a minister plenipoten-

tiary, said: "We must have war; we cannot make any headway without it. It will cleanse us, drive all discord and petty rivalries out of our spirit, and awaken France to new life."

When such men desired war, it was evident that, in spite of the Socialists, war was looked upon as a possibility.

It seemed almost symbolic that the grandchild of the great pacifist Renan, Ernest Psichari, should speak of war with Germany as a "holy war."

And then Charles Humbert, the publicist, came with his startling revelations as to the military unpreparedness of France. Most of the billions appropriated for defence had apparently slipped into the pockets of private persons.

Jaurès was the only man in public life who stubbornly believed in peace. The conviction cost him his popularity, and he fell, assassinated, a martyr for pacifism.

* * *

During this same period Patriotic passion ran riot in Germany. The nation was convinced that if Germany was disliked it was because of her virtues, her initiative, her amazing development, her industry. This hatred felt by other nations for Germany was looked upon as the basest of all, being founded on envy and spite. Economic conditions obliged Germany to pursue an imperialistic policy, and she felt entitled to

supplant England as the ruling power in Europe. Germany believed in her ethical right to take whatever might be necessary to satisfy her national ambition, and her belief was strengthened by a deep-rooted conviction that both France and England were unworthy of their rank. Both were said to be degenerating.

Many German military associations fostered a martial spirit among the young. It was due to them, perhaps, that 1,800,000 men enlisted as volunteers within a week after the declaration of war. The French are a nation of fighters, but they are not pugnacious by temperament like the Germans. When in 1900 it was announced in Paris that the attack on the allied ambassadors in Pekin demanded revenge, 120 men enrolled voluntarily, while the officers demanded that their pay be increased beyond that of colonial warfare. Urbain Gohier, the writer, complained bitterly about this. In Germany, at the same time, the announcement brought 130,000 volunteers, and instead of demanding higher pay the officers vied with each other in being allowed to participate.

* * *

The Russians hate the Germans for their virtues as much as for their less estimable qualities. For centuries men of German descent have played a prominent part in St. Petersburg, and the Russians have witnessed this with growing irritation. Although the Russians have learnt much from the Germans, they are

not grateful. The Baltic nobility has made itself sincerely hated in Lifland and Estland. In return, the Russians have denationalised the old German university at Dorpat. The methodic German mind is in direct opposition to the Russian's unmethodical intelligence. But, first and last, Russians regret the short-sighted policy of Nicholas I, and even more that of Alexandre II, which strengthened Germany's position. Nicholas I helped the Hapsburgs to quell the Hungarian rebellion, while Alexandre II, without any regard for the menace to Russia's borders, allowed the Germans to crush and mutilate France. And, when discussing Germany's unity and increasing military strength, Russians frequently conclude with the words, *Alexandre II fecit.*

And just as the Prussian and the South German spirit — that is the small-state spirit of the former German confederation — grew into Germanism and this gradually developed into a spirit of aggressive Pan-Germanism, so the Slavophile element in Russia created a spirit of Pan-Slavism. Pan-Slavism was finally erected in opposition to Pan-Germanism, and the opposition between Russia and Germanism in the two great empires grew into the conflict between Slavism and Germanism; into the struggle between Slavs and Teutons for the supremacy of the world.

Yet Russia's attack is directed on Austria rather than on Germany. The changes in the Balkan penir

sula have obliged the Hapsburg monarchy to fight for its life.

For although Austria's great Slav population is Polish in Galicia and Tcheque in Bohemia, it is pure Serbian in Bosnia Herzegovina. And when Serbia, having gained assurance by her success in the Balkan War, began to stretch out her arms toward Austria's recently annexed provinces whose feeling is quite Serbian, Austria, fearing complications from the Serbs within her empire, decided once for all to crush Serbia's ambitions.

Although Russia abuses and brutally oppresses Poles and Ruthenians within her boundaries, she poses, outside her own territory, as the fair champion and defender of the Slavs. And unless she were willing to lose her prestige and shatter this beautiful illusion, she could not allow Austria to attack and humiliate Serbia.

While France aspires to win back the provinces lost in 1871 and turns her resentment toward Berlin, Russia's hatred is directed toward Vienna and her ambition is to break up Austria's power and to dominate the Slav element of the Austro-Hungarian empire. Russia attacks Germany because Germany backs Austria as representative of Germanism.

* * *

England is different. Austria is a secondary consideration to England. The rivalry between England and Germany alone has made the world war possible.

This rivalry is something entirely new. For centuries England and France, and England and Russia have been opposed to each other as racially irreconcilable. England and France warred incessantly during the Middle Ages and in Napoleonic days. They were on the verge of a break as recently as in 1898 at the time of the Fashoda incidents. Yet now their past differences are forgotten, and they have joined forces and seem to have come to a real understanding.

England and Russia seem even more fundamentally opposed than England and France. They clashed in the Crimean War; they have frequently had conflicting interests in Asia. In race, form of government, and religion they are direct opposites. Yet this has not prevented their present agreement.

England and Germany, on the other hand, have been the best of friends throughout the centuries.

The Germans have admired English poetry and science most sincerely. Goethe worshipped Shakespeare; Haeckel, Darwin; Gervinius praised English executive ability and political temperament as reflected in Shakespeare. Many English writers, like Coleridge, have shown traces of German influence, and have even admired Prussianism as manifested by the Corporal King, the great Frederick's father. Carlyle wrote what one might almost call a hymn to him, praising him as the man who made order out of chaos and Carlyle called Goethe the greatest of the gre

Many Britons admired Germany at the expense of France.

In both countries most of the inhabitants are of Germanic origin, to which Celtic blood is added in England, Slav in Germany. Both languages are Germanic and closely related. Both nations have a majority of Protestants, a minority of Roman Catholics. In the past they have frequently been allies against France. At Waterloo the victory was due to their assembled armies.

Until now, the two nations have never made war on each other. Yet the new century has witnessed a tension arise between them and grow so violent that upon two previous occasions it almost broke into war. The first time — after Tangiers — war was avoided because France was unprepared; and the second time — after Agadir — because Germany retreated at the decisive moment.

* * *

Germany's increasing sea power has, of course, been the cause of this tension. As long as England ruled over the best parts of the world and maintained her supremacy at sea, the Island Empire was satisfied and desired no change in the situation. Germany, on the other hand, the youthful climber, was dissatisfied and longed for radically different conditions, and accused the older Power of monopolising the place in the sunlight to which the youthful Power felt entitled.

And as this tension developed the fundamental differences between the two peoples, united by race and language, became apparent. There was the opposition between liberalism and autocracy, between civilian spirit and militarism, between a people who do not begrudge others free trade and who believe in liberty and independent government and a people waxed rich on protection, dominated by the Junkers and their bureaucracy. In England an independent press and a government responsible to the people; in Germany a semi-official press, a government responsible only to the kaiser and a kaiser responsible only to God. This opposition is, of course, only a hidden, fundamental cause; it has never figured as the reason of any definite break or misunderstanding.

Germany's dissatisfaction may be summed up in few words. Germany needed an outlet for her too numerous population. She had previously allowed her people to emigrate to America, but the twenty million inhabitants the United States thereby gained were practically lost to the mother country. So Germany, pressed by the need of expansion, looked about for colonies of her own. But she found that everything worth while had already been taken and very frequently England stood in her way. And the new, growing empire began to believe that England purposely thwarted her colonial ambitions. Yet Germany herself, twenty years ago, had no thought of colonial expansion

generation ago Germany was personified by Bismarck, and Bismarck did not want colonies which he looked upon as a snare or a danger. He encouraged the French in Africa, hoping to make them forget Alsace, and sent them to Tunis and Madagascar and received, therefor, Barthelemy de St. Hilaire's truly imbecile thanks.

It would be absurd to call a politician like Bismarck shortsighted. But he himself limited the scope of his life work, and if Germany now suffers from a thirst for land, not England, but Bismarck, is to blame.

* * *

If the English have viewed Germany with disfavour, it is largely because their ignorance of the German people made them particularly receptive to the campaign of the nationalistic press. A man like Maxe, for instance, in his *National Review,* has for half a dozen years designated Germany as the enemy. As a subject, German is scarcely taught in English schools and universities. In all Scotland there is not one chair of Germanic language and literature. In England there is one — in Cambridge. It is held by the able and distinguished Professor Karl Breul, but this chair was endowed by a rich German merchant. The ignorance of German is so great in England that out of one hundred members of the House of Commons ninety-five do not know one word of the language.

Yet ignorance is not the essence of the Anglo-German

quarrel, for the hatred is most violent in Germany and there English is extensively known.

For forty-four years Germany has appeared peace loving, if we except Bismarck's plan to crush France in 1875, frustrated by Gortschakoff's intervention. This is not particularly meritorious of Germany, for a war would have ruined her growing commerce, and besides it was unnecessary as Germany has been the undisputed ruler of the Continent for twenty-five years.

Her naval ambitions, however, caused unrest in England. The Germans augmented their navy feverishly and passionately, worked on it night and day — it seemed as if they wished to wrench the dominion of the sea away from England. Now supremacy at sea is essential to the Island Empire. Aside from the fact that Great Britain is an Asiatic, African, Australian, and North American Power quite as much as a European one, the object of the navy is to safeguard England's sustenance and to prevent the mother country from being starved or humiliated.

In the past England has systematically destroyed every navy which could menace Great Britain or be used against the empire (as Denmark's). In this way England annihilated the Spanish, Dutch, French, and Danish fleets. England's position as a world Power would have been changed if she had allowed Germany to increase and again increase her fleet.

For while it might be said that England need only

build two ships for every one of Germany's, the English taxpayer in the long run could not stand such a strain, nor could England — who does not want conscription — find enough men to man all these ships.

England, therefore, felt Germany's growing navy as a challenge. In England a large army would have been an offensive weapon; the navy, on the other hand, is defensive, as it safeguards the nation's food supply. In Germany a large army is defensive, needed to guard the long frontiers, against Russia on the one side and France on the other. But the immense, admirably constructed and equipped fleet is principally an offensive weapon.

It is true that the English have always ignored Germany's national needs. Germany must have coaling stations and ports throughout the globe. As things are now a German steamer, even at half speed, cannot reach the German possessions in the Pacific Ocean. This, of course, is galling to a great Power, and it is foolish of England to refuse Germany coaling stations.

A German invasion of England has been a bugbear created by English nationalists, but the German army does not have to cross the Channel in order to menace England. An attack through Belgium and France — as the present one — and — after victorious battles — the annexation of Belgium would be a death blow to England's world supremacy.

Intellectually the German would seem a citizen of

the world. His nationality is rapidly absorbed by the foreign community where he resides; he becomes a North American, a Hungarian, or a Russian within one generation. While the Englishman always retains his racial characteristics, the German, like the Scandinavian, loses his.

Intellectually, then, the German seems a cosmopolitan. He translates and absorbs everything worth knowing, also everything English. Shakespeare is played more often and given better productions in Germany than in England; Darwin has been quite adopted; Wilde and Shaw are more popular in Germany than in England. And as a cosmopolitan the German seems a radical. Thinkers like Haeckel and Nietzsche are more admired than philosophers like Eucken, James, or Bergson; but from a political point of view, even the most radical German professor is a conservative, and the spiked helmet is dearer to him than all the red bonnets in the world. Even in Russia the universities are the centres of the Opposition, but German universities are highly conservative; members of the opposing political factions are not appointed nor promoted.

Therefore, in his own home, the German is not a cosmopolitan. Within the German Empire as well as in Austria-Hungary he asserts his nationalism with unbounded self-sufficiency and oppresses with an unruffled conscience Danes, Poles, Frenchmen, Tchèques, Ru-

manians, and Serbs, when, as defeated peoples, they are found within the two empires.

For a long time German and Prussian were considered antithetical terms. The German was supposed to be warm, good natured, sentimental, usually poetic, musical, and dreamy, while the Prussian was stiff, obsequious, cold, precise, and methodical. Since Prussia succeeded in disciplining Germany, however, the whole people bear the Prussian imprint. Undoubtedly Germany for the last forty years has appeared to be a peaceful nation; the Kaiser theoretically favoured peace, and the Socialists tried to guarantee it in some practical manner, but stronger forces have been at work to foment war — military industries like Krupp, for instance, and thousands of officers whose business is war. Not in vain did the Kaiser in his speech in July, 1900, set the warfare of the Huns up as an example. The plundering of Pekin by the allies that year was a burning shame.

Prussia is a military nation — military in its history and tradition. All history as taught in Prussia centres around Rossbach, Waterloo, and Sadan. Prussia's characteristic, like Sparta's, is to be a nation of fighters, and it has set that stamp on all Germany. Never have ideals been more military than in Germany at the present moment, while Germany's army, organisation, and equipment are the finest in the world. If England had seriously considered crushing

Germany she would have had to introduce conscription. At the present moment her army is of slight importance compared with Germany's.

While Darwinism in England was interpreted to mean the survival of the fittest without special reference to the selection made in war, Darwinism in Germany was made the basis of worship of war. Lessing and Kant, Herder and Goethe, were peace lovers — Kant was a pacifist; but new Germany has made the holiness of war her motto, believes war a link in the divine organisation of the universe, and considers peaceful endeavour of little worth compared with war. Without war and perpetual preparedness for war nations and individuals grow weak and flabby. The catchword from Nietzsche, the lust of power, has been generally accepted and especially his insolent phrase: "A good cause does not ennoble war but a good war ennobles any cause."

* * *

German trade rivalry first caused dissatisfaction in England; England's "open door" was met by high tariffs in Germany. The English were therefore obliged to compete under unfavourable conditions; for British standards of living were higher, and German wares were poorer. This was at the time when the German technician Franz Reulaux (1877) correctly dismissed German wares with the disparaging phrase which long clung to them, *billig und schlecht*. But time

passed. The English soon had to admit that the Germans were more painstaking, knew more languages, strove more anxiously to satisfy their customers. The German salesman is known to outdistance all others.

Germany's success, due to her many admirable qualities, would have caused no ill feeling in England had the Germans not been so *parvenus*. But the English did not like that the people felt what the Kaiser openly asserted: We are the salt of the earth. England did not like that the Germans acted as though they belonged to a higher race, and since 1870, in fact, remained blind to the virtues of other nations.

* * *

And now all that has rankled during the last forty years is breaking out. All efforts toward international peace and conciliation are forgotten and ridiculed. Carnegie's Peace Palace at The Hague may be given a thorough cleaning. Vacations may be accorded European diplomats whose efforts are not impressive, even when they work. A perfect example of a useless diplomat is, perhaps, the French ambassador in Vienna, who had so little comprehension of conditions that he allowed the President of France and the Premier to leave for a series of diplomatic visits immediately preceding Austria's ultimatum to Serbia. With Edward VII the last great diplomat seems to have disappeared.

* * *

All the emperors and kings who are now beginning war call each on his God to crush the enemy. So in ancient days Moab cried to Kamosch, Israel called on Jehovah. The Russian God would seem a sort of national God, when the Tzar says, "Russia's God is a powerful God," and a sort of Olympian God when the President of the Duma speaks of Him as the "King of Kings and the God of Gods." The God of Austria-Hungary guards the rights of the Dual Monarchy; the Serbian God protects Serbia. The German God, also spoken of as "Our Old Ally from Rossbach," guards the Kaiser as His representative on earth, and the Kaiser calls on his people to fall on their knees and thank Him for their victories. England's God protects the King. Little Belgium's God has done His best — without particular success — to defend Belgium's independence. The anti-clerical government of France alone seems to wish to get along without God and is content to rely on the justice of its cause — something, of course, which all the other nations also rely on. On this one point at least all belligerents seem to agree. Most assuredly, to Belgium and Germany, Germany and France, Russia and Germany, Austria and Serbia, Germany and England, etc., justice means exactly the opposite.

In short, there are enough gods and causes of justice in the ring, but if there had been one single statesman worthy of the name the gods would not have had to

allow Beelzebub to take the place of the Holy Ghost and the cause of justice would have been advanced without mass murder. Justice! It is hard to see what it has to do with the slaughter of the youth of Europe.

In other wars it was easy to name the objects for which the nations were fighting, as when Italy fought to become an independent nation, or when Prussia wanted the port of Kiel. But at the present moment powers like Austria, Germany, and France are fighting for their existence, Belgium for her sovereignty and independence, Serbia for her future, Japan for her future, Russia for her prestige, England for her position as a world power. One power, never mentioned, will benefit by the war: Socialism. The various measures taken by the governments to prevent the exploitation of the people by private capital will remain in force after the war is over.

Russia moves slowly and she has always shown herself rather lukewarm to France. It took the French from August, 1891, to the beginning of 1894 to persuade Russia to form a purely defensive alliance. The agreement of 1910 became ineffective when Russia removed her troops from the Polish border. Until that time she had had three very powerful *corps d'armée* at the frontier — only three hundred kilometres from Berlin. In October, 1910, they were brought back two hundred kilometres to the Vistula. To concentrate

four or five army corps at the border now requires the month that has already passed.

Austria does not seem to have progressed much, either, in her attack on Serbia. It would seem as if all efforts are concentrated on the Western front, where the two opposing million armies are beginning their mutual destruction.

Germany's first entrance on the battlefield was not marked with the assurance of 1870. She stumbled over the threshold. Belgium undoubtedly surprised her by her undaunted resistance, for which much credit is due Henry Brialmont, the greatest fortress builder of modern times. The forts of Antwerp are particularly renowned. But Germany's military organisation is remarkable and in the long run overcomes all obstacles.

In a country left outside the conflict it is ugly and discouraging to find traces of panic, miserliness, cupidity — causing speculation in food and necessaries. But the unanimous devotion and abnegation found in Serbia, Belgium, France, and Germany is tragically inspiring.

The future, however, remains dark. The moment is so great that one is awed into silence. The grim tragedy is beginning. No one can peer into the future, and if our heads remain cool, our hearts are full of terror.

# DIFFERENT POINTS OF VIEW ON THE WAR

(November, 1914)

## The English Point of View

In the summer of 1914 the British Lord Chancellor, Viscount Haldane de Cloan, lectured in Canada before an assembled body of American and Canadian jurists and the lecture was published by the International Conciliation. Lord Haldane, having pointed to the increasing harmony between English-speaking peoples, concluded that universal harmony and peaceful collaboration between nations was a future possibility. The Lord Chancellor quoted Renan, who, according to George Meredith, "had more ideas in his head than any other European," as saying that "humanity is not bounded by race nor language nor religion, nor by rivers nor mountain ranges" and referred to Goethe, a still greater man, as having said: "We may look upon all civilised nations as forming one great alliance, united by mutual endeavour and working towards the same goal."

As a preface to Lord Haldane's lecture, Theodore Ruyssen, professor at the University of Bordeaux, wrote: "One thing, at least, is certain — war be-

comes rarer. . . . Durable alliances creating new political groups neutralise the ambitions of individual states, and thereby war threats are minimised or silenced in a more or less satisfactory manner. The most excitable Powers' desire to strike first is fettered by countless threads spun from one part of the earth to another, binding the nations together and creating solidarity."

This was said a few months before the outbreak of the world war. Some of the best men in Europe believed humanity had progressed so far. Now Viscount Haldane is Lord Chancellor of the Government which has declared war on Germany.

I, for my part, did not share these optimistic views. In a lecture I gave in February, 1914, in Christiania and Bergen, on the tension between England and Germany, I explained why I believed the outlook was dark. But I was always glad to co-operate in peace work.

From the 12th to the 19th of September the twenty-first World's Peace Congress was to have been held in Vienna. Count Berchtold was among the organisers — he who now directs the war on Serbia, France, England, Russia, Montenegro, Belgium, and Japan. Emperor Franz Joseph had invited the members of this congress to an elaborate court function. The 18th of September I was to have spoken at the City Hall in Vienna. When Austria-Hungary declared war on Servia, July 28, I sent my regrets. The conference, of course, died a natural death.

When the war broke out and blazed to proportions which no other war on this earth ever reached, all of the warring states disclaimed responsibility for it, and began to lay all the blame on their enemies. The most violent and passionate protests were voiced as to the methods of warfare. Not only the press and governments of belligerent nations, but numerous artists and men of science — neutrals as well as belligerents — have, as it is known, taken sides, passionately.

## I

Of the numerous English pamphlets inspired by the war, Oxford University alone has so far published twenty-four. Gilbert Murray's is naturally first mentioned, because this distinguished scholar, who has been a peace advocate all his life, the enthusiastic translator of Euripides' "Trojan Women" (the first important European cry against war) has set the fundamental question, "Is war ever justified?" He answers it in reply to the supposed questions of a Tolstoian, or of one who is convinced that the doctrine of turning the other cheek is the only salvation, and who feels that the key to the world's progress is to return good for evil.

Gilbert Murray, real Englishman that he is, believes no one could read the official explanations as to the origin of the war made by the British, German, and

Russian governments without coming to the conclusion that Germany (or a powerful party in Germany) planned the war long beforehand. Germany chose the moment when she knew her neighbours were unprepared; prevented peaceful understanding between Austria and Serbia; and, in order to crush France more rapidly, violated Belgium neutrality. But he foresees the remark that "Germany's aggression need not have made us aggressors. We had done our best to maintain peace. When our efforts proved vain, we need not have increased the misery; we could have remained neutral as the United States."

Gilbert Murray then asks: "Suppose you saw a wicked, a drunken, or insane man attack a child on the highway. Would you not stop him, and, if necessary, knock him down?" The Tolstoian replies: "Why should I commit a sin? Let the child be killed! Let the wicked man continue his evil deeds. At least, I do not intend to increase the unnecessary violence in the world."

No discussion is possible with people who feel this way. Gilbert Murray looks upon matters as follows:

Austria suddenly said to little Serbia: "You are a wicked little state. I have annexed and am now ruling a few million of your compatriots against their will, yet you persistently harbour inimical feelings against me. This I will not stand for. Discharge at once all functionaries, politicians, and soldiers who do not love

Austria. I shall, every now and then, send you a list of people whom I expect you to discharge or imprison for life. If you don't accept my terms within forty-eight hours, I, being stronger, will force you to do so." Serbia agreed to two-thirds of Austria's demands, suggested arbitration in regard to the remaining third — to which it could not yield except at the cost of its national sovereignty. Austria's reply was a declaration of war.

In England the situation was interpreted as follows:

The assassination of the Austrian Archduke and Archduchess had taken place. The Archduke had never been very popular with the people and because of his High Catholic intolerance it was generally considered regrettable that he was to mount the throne. But his death changed everything. Indescribable horror was expressed at the assassination. Austria and Germany even went so far as to blame Serbia for the crime. Yet Portugal hadn't been called "a nation of assassins" because the King and most of the members of the royal family were the victims of a wide-reaching political conspiracy, nor had Italy been called a nation of assassins because an Italian anarchist killed the Empress of Austria, and another King Humberto of Italy.

By the treaties of 1831–32 and 1839 Belgium had been declared an "independent and neutral" state. This treaty Prussia, as well as Great Britain, signed.

In October, 1907, all the Powers who participated in The Hague Conference agreed, among other things that the rights of neutral nations are inviolable. Belligerent nations must not send troops or supplies (whether ammunition or reserves) through the territory of a neutral state.

Yet Germany said to Belgium: "We have no quarrel with you. But for various reasons we wish to march over your territory and perhaps fight a battle or two. We know that you have agreed not to permit such proceedings, but we can't help ourselves. Consent, and we will pay you in full for any damage done. Refuse, and we'll punish you so you will wish you had never lived."

Belgium at that moment was a free, independent nation. If it had granted Germany's request it would no longer have been either. It would have taken orders from a stranger who had no right to command.

The result is that Belgium for the time being is stricken from the roll of independent nations.

## II

According to the English, the German-speaking people have scant respect for small nations. As the Central Empires owe their existence to an amalgamation of small states, their attitude is not surprising.

As opposed to this disdain of the smaller communi-

ties, English authors (as the vice-rector of the University of Sheffield, H. A. S. Fisher) remind us that "all valuable civilisation springs from small states." The Old Testament, Homer, the Attic drama and Elizabethan literature, the art of the Italian Renaissance, are all products of small states. The world owes Athens, Jerusalem, Florence, Weimar, much more than monarchs like Louis XIV, Napoleon, or William II. Therefore England wants to maintain small states on the map of the world.

Certain military temperaments in Germany consider it regrettable or even contemptible that small states organise their national life on a basis of peace and aspire to keep out of war. But even if we were to grant — for the sake of argument — that the spirit of Switzerland, Denmark, Holland, and Belgium would be essentially improved if these countries were annexed by some great military power, would not the disappearance of these peace oases prove a real loss to humanity? Has the policy of conquest shown itself beneficial? Has Poland's nonexistence as a state really profited the two states who divided it between them? — has it not rather been a source of perpetual trouble? Has the acquisition of Alsace-Lorraine not been equally oppressive for rulers and subjects?

The English, who have considerable experience in handling foreign elements within their empire, are amazed at Prussia's policy, for they realise how unin-

telligent and fatally oppressive it has been. The German method is to regard every characteristic or individualistic trait not merely as troublesome — which it may be — but as offensive — which it very rarely is.

The advantages of small communities is to modify the standard created by larger communities. Small nations have the same effect on Europe that individuality has on society — they disprove, counteract, oppose the deadening belief that everything depends on the brute strength of organised masses.

If the word *civilisation* means anything, if it implies good will, faithfulness to duty, self-sacrifice, intellectual interest, and clear judgment, there is no reason for believing that civilisation is monopolised by the larger states. Indeed, certain forms of brutal patriotism are inimical to civilised thought. Such patriotism may be combined with heroism, which existed even in barbarous times, but it is an expression of fanaticism, which has always been the worst enemy of progress whether, as religious fanaticism, it burnt heretics on the stake or as military fanaticism, it annihilates whatever interferes with its plans.

## III

Therefore, if Great Britain and the English are asked what they are fighting for the answer is:

" First of all for our *national honour*. We promised

solemnly to guarantee Belgium's neutrality when Belgium became an independent nation and Prussia, who now violates this neutrality, agreed to uphold it just as we. Of what use are treaties if they can be broken without penalty, if one party finds it convenient to do so? If international morality doesn't exist, what is to become of individual morality and business morality? Breach of faith jeopardises all law and all civilisation. Germany says France *would have* violated Belgium's neutrality if Germany had not done so. But France said, 'No,' when, just before the war, Sir Edward Grey asked whether she had such intentions. Germany refused to answer, and the German Chancellor soon afterwards called the treaty 'a scrap of paper.'

"Secondly, we are fighting for small nations, and for the *rights of all small nations*. The Pan-Germanists want to absorb all nations in any way related to Germany by race or language. Germany ignores these small nations' struggles for independence in the past, as well as their noble fight for freedom in our days.

"In the third place we are fighting for *democracy* as opposed to autocracy. Most assuredly Russia is an absolute monarchy, but she would have had a constitution more than fifty years ago if Alexander had not been assassinated. She has a Duma, at any rate, and is progressing toward constitutional government. France is a republic. The Belgian and Japanese gov-

ernments resemble the English. During the last forty years Germany, on the contrary, has not progressed at all along democratic lines; the Reichstag has no influence; the ministers are not responsible; the masses in Prussia have no voting power compared with the aristocracy. The Emperor is war lord. The army and navy are under his command alone.

"Furthermore, we are fighting for *the peace of Europe;* for arbitration to prevent war, and for the organisation of states on a basis of peace as opposed to militarism. The German triumphs of 1864, 1866, 1870 were harvested by militarism. War was looked upon as all powerful in Germany. Treitscke wrote: 'We disposed of Austria; we disposed of France; the last and worst bout is left: England.' Germany's mighty army and powerful fleet were supposed to dispose of that.

"We are first and last fighting for our *national existence,* the ultimate object of every nation. The struggle will be long and hard as Germany is also fighting for her national existence. Germany has more inhabitants than we, and her people are cemented by a devotion to state and fatherland scarcely ever equalled, let alone surpassed, by any other people. The Germans meant to tackle England last of all. First they had hoped to crush France; then to weaken Russia; after that they would have turned on us. They hate us now because we blocked this plan.

"What if the Germans were to succeed? What would happen?

"Belgium would remain German, and, as Napoleon said, the power which holds Antwerp points a pistol at England's heart. Even if Belgium were granted an apparent independence, it would have to submit to German tariff regulations. Belgian Congo would, of course, be taken, and this would imperil our African colonies.

"Even if Holland were to remain outwardly independent it would be German in reality. Rotterdam would virtually be German; the mouth of the Scheldt would be controlled by Germany. France's fate would be that predicted by Bismarck when he spoke of tapping France until her blood ran white. The war indemnities imposed on her in this war would make those of 1871 seem like a flea bite. All French colonies would be annexed by Germany, and Spain would have to retire from Morocco. England would have a German Tangiers opposite Gibraltar, and a German Agadir on the Atlantic coast would threaten her communications with Nigeria and South Africa. The entire North Sea from the Elbe to Dover would come under German control. By means of the French billions, Germany could triple her fleet.

"Great Britain's supremacy depends absolutely on her invincibility at sea — without it she would have no hold on India and the colonies scattered all over

the world. But if Germany dominated the North Sea, England could not remain the ruling sea power. While the United States would not allow Germany to invade Canada, Canada would have to abandon England and ally herself with the United States in self-defence. Important territories in Australia would be conquered by Germany, and South Africa would become German land. British interests in Africa as well as in Hong Kong, the Malayan states, Gibraltar and Malta — everything worth taking would be wrenched away. And even if England were allowed to keep India and Egypt, her prestige would be so diminished that it would merely be a question of time before she lost these possessions too. Ireland would probably become a separate state; Cork, Dublin, and Belfast would have German garrisons.

" Such provisions are not the result of a panicstricken imagination. In *Hamburger Fremdenblatt* for September 4 the German Vice-Admiral Kirchoff wrote: 'Germany's army and navy are now ready to attack England in the North Sea and in the Channel. We will fight her by every means in our power — at sea, in the air, and on land — by financial, political, and economic forces. Whether the struggle be long or short, Germany will not rest until her goal has been reached.' "

Therefore the English feel that not only are they carrying on a war for the rights of small states (which in the days of the Boer War scarcely troubled their con-

science) but that they are carrying on a war of life and death for England's existence as a world power.

### The French Point of View

The year 1871 is a turning-point in the history of France of to-day.

The French feel: "We were defeated and crippled in 1870–71. Although bled to the last drop, we reacted, and for more than forty years we have tried to make the best of the situation. But even our crippled and checkered national life galled the victor who had dreamt of crushing us beyond hope. The civilised world can bear witness to the fact that for more than forty years we have formed the peaceful element in Europe. With endless patience we have tried to safeguard our independence and defend our liberty. Again and again, without provocation, our peace has been threatened by the flash of German swords. But we never lost our self-control.

"We lived in peace. But we were obliged to think of our defence and as we were divided politically we provided badly for this defence. We never thought of attacking. And when our country was humiliated or scorned, officially as in Alsace-Lorraine or unofficially as in the German press, we screened ourselves behind a mask of indifference and uttered no word, made not a movement, apparently untouched by the cries of French voices on the other side of the frontier!

"But although varying ideals, springing from conflicting traditions — the Catholic and the Revolutionary, the Royalist and the Republican, the liberal and the socialistic — divided our national life, now that the hour of danger has struck, now that we cannot lose the slightest bit of land without losing France herself, now we have become one people, one soul, one will in its highest potentiality. Now you cannot find two Frenchmen who hate each other. Our only desire is to prove worthy of our forefathers. We, who never have flinched, who have met derisions and humiliations with unbowed head and without loss of colour, are like old steel swords tempered so finely that they cannot break but respond at once to the armourer's hammer. France has laid the soul of her people on the anvil!"

The French feel it as a touch of Fate's irony that a Frenchman, Count Gobineau, should have been the first to evolve the theory of the moral superiority of the German people. His amusing doctrine as to the superiority of the blond, elongated type of skull was hailed with joy by German men of science. In opposition to this the French now contend that the narrow elongated skulls are also found among wild races like the Hottentots, the Ashanti Negroes, the Papuans. In opposition to the theory of the superiority of the German people they point to the fact that the Prussians, who rule Germany, are not of German origin. The German knights who founded Prussia were adventurers from all races,

and the land they settled was almost completely Slav. Stuart Mill has, somewhere, very justly remarked that of all the easy and most childish methods of accounting without effort for the spiritual, psychological, and social forces which influence man, the most elemental is to ascribe variations in manners and character to racial differences.

Among German theorists, Woltman teaches that the German has reached the highest civilisation, "thanks to the perfect organisation of the German mind"; all the great men in history were German in reality, he claims. Giotto's real name was Jotte, Tasso was Dasse, Leonardo was a German by the name of Leonhard, Diderot was Tieroth; Gounod, Gundiwald. The whole Italian Renaissance was a German product. (I know the book only by Jean Finot's résumé of it, but a similar essay has also been published in Danish.)

Houston Chamberlain, the Germanised Englishman, Emperor William's favourite author, teaches that everything great in the Christian Era and all inventions of mankind must be credited to the German race. This humorist does not know that men of science doubt the Jew's Semitic descent; he claims that Jesus was not a Jew but an Aryan and that the Germans are the true Aryans.

The French felt unpleasantly affected when German professors and generals gave vent to the same bellicose

patriotism. General Bernhardi considers the Germans the super race, just as Nietzsche spoke of the superman. General von der Goltz, as well as Colonel Köttschau, make it a point to show that in war the greatest brutality is in reality most humane as it creates the greatest desire for the cessation of war. In war, violence and brutality are bound by no conventions of international law. What was previously called civilisation, although it never completely mastered humanity, is theoretically crushed by these authors in a way which, because it is so methodic, one scarcely can call barbarous. Eminent men show an alarming Pan-Germanism. Marshal Baron Bronsart von Schellendorf, former Minister of War, writes: "We claim that our country has a right not only to the North Sea but to the Mediterranean and the Atlantic. Gradually we intend to annex Denmark, Holland, Belgium, Franche Comté, North Switzerland, Triest, Venice, and finally that strip of Northern France that lies between the Somme and the Loire." And these far-reaching plans are justified by the argument, "We must not forget the civilising mission which destiny has entrusted to us."

France was surprised that the certainty of divine superiority should go hand in hand with enthusiasm for war as war. In Germany during the last years war has again and again been declared the highest and holiest expression of human activity, the greatest bene-

factor of humanity, the only test of universal ability, which constructs, strengthens, and maintains state and society.

From the German armies on French territory the song rises, "*Deutschland, Deutschland, über alles!*" And the French ask, "Also above right, justice, liberty, humanity?"

The French people did not want war. Nevertheless a certain militarism (as shown by the Dreyfus affair) had found expression in France. The unpleasant events in Saverne in 1914 not only stirred French militarists to anger but brought them together. Both the *Action Française* and the *Echo de Paris* fully understood that William II wished to demonstrate that his officers should not suffer any slight, but should feel themselves covered even if in the wrong: "Would that officers in other countries could have the same feeling!"

In this war the French, with regard to Germany, consider themselves the champions of modern democracy as established in France by the Revolution. To them, Prussia's constitution seems a relic of the Middle Ages. The members of the Prussian Diet are elected, as is known, by a three class vote, which upon one occasion, in Berlin, enabled two men, the Botzow Brothers, to elect twice as many candidates as the 571 men who formed the third class. Prussia has a reactionary representation and her whole influence on Europe is reactionary. Prussia pretends to favour Poland now, but

Germany helped Russia to crush Poland at the time of the Polish uprising in 1863. Prussia, as opposed to religionless France, champions the Christian state; but she sided with her ally, Turkey, against the Christian Armenians when they were massacred in the end of the nineteenth century. Now the Germans stamp the Russians as barbarians, knout swingers, and enemies of liberty; but until the declaration of war the Prussian police watched and spied on every poor, radical Russian student in his garret in Berlin or Munich; again and again he was asked to show his papers — and woe to him if these were not in order! With glee he was handed over to the Russian police. If there was any place on earth where no hater of Tzarism dared go, it was Berlin. Russian revolutionaries everywhere regarded the Prussian police as a branch of the Russian.

The French point with pride to the inscription on their official buildings: *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity* — an inscription bearing, it is true, little semblance to fact — and claim that the inscription found on most German monuments is: *Es ist verboten.* . . .

In France, attention is also drawn to the fact that after the fall of Count Bülow (as a punishment because he announced in the Reichstag that the Kaiser had promised not to interfere in German politics) the new "bloc" has levied taxes to the amount of six hundred million francs a year on articles of necessity. Great property owners do not contribute a penny of this.

All promises of electoral reforms made by Prince Bülow have fallen into oblivion — while the junker and agrarian policies are enforced without regard for the suffering of the people. The Kaiser must not be criticised; his person is considered arch-holy, and suits of *lèse majesté* abound in Germany. There is nothing comparable to this in France. In Germany a socialist writer was condemned to imprisonment for a year and a half for having criticised the Emperor's great-grandmother, Empress Louise of Prussia. Cases of *lèse majesté,* and imprisonment inflicted therefor, have steadily increased. From 1888 to 1898, in the first ten years of the Emperor's reign, the terms of those imprisoned for *lèse majesté* totalled 1120 years. In *La Revue* it is claimed that up to 1912, 12,600 years' imprisonment had been imposed, according to German statistics. This can hardly be true. One thing is sure, however, that in sentences of this kind the Kaiser never makes use of his right of pardon.

In contrast to France an admirable discipline reigns in Germany, but this discipline leaves little room for independent thought. Even German science is official; as Frederick the Great is supposed to have said: "I begin by taking. Then I always find men of science to prove the justice of my claim."

The strength of the caste system which the Revolution destroyed in France surprises the Frenchman who visits Germany. Officers belong to a higher caste; function-

aries in their different hierarchies form another. While in France the mode of address is Monsieur and Madame, titles flourish to such an extent in Germany that no member of the upper classes is ever mentioned without his title. The French cannot tolerate this trait which appears in many forms; as sons of the Revolution they look upon it as servility.

So far as England and Germany are concerned, there is no difficulty in gathering material as to the attitude regarding the war. The foreigner is smothered with brochures and documents. But France is different. While from the beginning, Belgium, and thereupon Germany and England, protested loudly against the injury done them, France has scarcely appealed to Europe. She seems on the whole to consider the justice of her case so obvious that it does not need corroboration. And then at the beginning of the war the publication of magazines, etc., stopped almost entirely in France; for months the mails have been absolutely unreliable. At long intervals we get the daily newspapers, frequently censored, as in Russia.

Newspapers, printed by the hundred thousand for general circulation, cannot be used as a basis for him who seeks real motives or feelings. They contain, as the corresponding German publications, insults only. "Barbarians, bandits, murderers" correspond in French to the German epithets, especially in regard to England: "cowards, criminals, hypocrites, liars,

calumniators." The world scarcely has echo for such salutations. But they create and stimulate a national hatred so great that one can scarcely see how co-operation among the nations will be possible within the next dozen years. In all belligerent countries the press has much to be proud of. As it says in *Les Effrontés:*

VERNOUILLET

*"Ah, Giboyer, quelle admirable chose que la presse!"*

GIBOYER

*"Ne m'en parle pas, ça fait fremir!"*

Following the example of the German scientists, the learned men of France have not hesitated to use big words. At the Institute, Bergson, the president of the Academy, saluted the Belgian members with a speech which began:

"The struggle that is being waged against Germany is that of civilisation itself against barbarism. The whole world feels this, but our Academy has special authority to express it. As it has devoted itself to the study of spiritual, moral, and social problems, it is its duty to characterise Germany's brutality and cynicism as a return to barbarism."

Among the poets, Romain Rolland has frequently wielded the pen. Now and then he has asked his friends in neutral countries to take sides with him and he has been liberal and sympathetic enough not to mis-

understand their refusal. Alone he has asked for signatures to the following appeal to be sent to The Hague Peace Palace:

"In spite of the horror which filled the civilised world at the destruction of Malines and Louvain, the Germans have bombarded the Cathedral of Reims. This appalling crime is a blow not merely to one nation but to humanity itself. Such a monument is a sanctuary and a glory to humanity. The best elements with a cry of anger must reply to the insult which has been perpetrated by the hordes unfit to be reckoned among civilised peoples. Without blaming the whole German people for the crimes of its leaders, we regret, for its sake, that from its midst not one voice has been lifted in protest. Until the authors of these unpardonable crimes have been punished, we pass their names on to the curses of humanity."

But Romain Rolland was not satisfied by this violent attack which only demands the use of superlatives. He has, in the midst of the war, written such impartial and pacifying words as have not been heard in Germany, in spite of the Germans' assertion that they are fighting France without hatred. On the 22d and 23d of September he wrote in the *Journal de Génève* a poetic article entitled, "Above the battle" (*Au dessus de la mêlée*), where he begins by addressing the youth of all countries:

"Heroic youth of the world! With what reckless

joy you pour out your life blood! You young men, whom a common ideal tragically pits against one another! You enemy brothers! Slavs, rushing to save your race, Englishmen fighting for right and honour, fearless Belgian youths, who have dared to challenge the German colossus, Germans, who *fight to preserve Kant's thought and Kant's city against Cossacks,* and especially you, my young countrymen on the way to the firing line who have sent me a beautiful farewell — how I love you all!"

The voice that sounds most powerfully from France is the voice of humanity. While the rulers are throwing the blame for the war on one another, and while the people resign themselves to war, as brought on by a power stronger than mankind, by *Fate,* this voice reminds us that the human herd has always made of its feebleness a God, called it fate, and worshipped it. As if this *Fate* were anything but men's *lack of will power,* their inability to prevent misery! And now the herd instead of quieting the flames of war is casting fuel on it; each one comes rushing with his arms full.

France alone has expressed regret that the youth of all countries is marshalled into regiments, and that the *élite* of all belligerent countries has stepped into rank and file, convinced that their *own* country's cause is the only one of liberty and human progress. The clergy in all countries have appeared as the most passionate nationalists. No one is so intent on war as the

representatives of the King of Peace. Even the Socialists have buried their peace talk among old scrap irons. They have, particularly in Germany, hastened to forge new irons and arms, and to repudiate the past to defend one autocracy against another. This is true of all three empires. The three preying eagles, with one or two heads, are like vultures hovering over corpses and carcasses.

Immediately following the great defeat of 1870 France had no thought but to win back the lost provinces. Then came a time when this ideal seemed pushed aside. Among the educated youth there existed the friendliest feeling for Germany, sometimes even enthusiasm. Only in the twentieth century, especially since Agadir, did sentiment change and the thought of reconquering the lost possessions rise again.

The French campaign in Alsace, at the beginning of the war, was not a military move but a political one, designed to create within and without the borders a conception of the object of the war. For the present France seems to feel that it will be difficult to wrench these provinces away from the Germans by military power, but that the object may be obtained by a collapse of Austria-Hungary.

France looks not only to Europe but to the entire world. France expects the United States, as a Christian country, to be shocked at the Germans calling on 300,000 Mohammedans to carry on "a holy war on

Christian states." In France the people know that in case of war, the United States considers England as a mother country. France looks to Russia's inexhaustible army, to England's infinite resources, and feels lifted and strengthened by the knowledge that the catastrophe of 1870 was not repeated. The twentieth century found France surpassing all expectations.

### The German Point of View

At the outbreak of the war something very extraordinary happened. High and mighty Germany, whose motto for the last fifty years had been, *Oderint dum metuant!* (Let them hate provided they fear) suddenly began to crave love, and to ransack neutral countries for sympathy. Wherever Germany thought herself unjustly denigrated, if only by the usual fallacious press bureaus, she had the words " lies and calumnies " on her lips; while her papers reprinted *ad infinitum* every favourable or enthusiastic expression about Germany. Germany's defenders have been praised to the skies, and have been rewarded in a material way by large royalties from their books in Germany. Authors like Wells and Maeterlinck, composers like Saint Saens and Leoncavallo, who in one way or another have attacked Germany, have in return been most shockingly scored; they have been ridiculed and caricatured beyond mean and measure.

Few neutral authors of even mediocre reputation

escaped the request to make some statement favourable to Germany. As a rule the advantages of such a statement were flashed before the eyes of the potential partisan — with threats implied in case of refusal. A letter of this nature I recently received says: "*Wer in diesen Tagen Deutschland Freundschlaft bezeigt, dem wird es nie vergessen werden. Freilich auch nicht korrekte Gleichgiltigkeit.*" It is unnecessary to add that such addresses fail to produce the desired impression — at least on an author of standing.

Like the English and French, the German papers are filled to the overflow with self-praise; therefore foreign approbation, for a change, is most eagerly sought. But to be acceptable, praise must be unconditional. I know of an author who was asked, first by a German, then by an Austrian paper, to say something about the war. His words were never printed because they were not sufficiently pro-German. Then he received a telegram from a large English paper; he sent an article; this was not accepted for it was not sufficiently pro-English. In other words, no side cares to hear the truth — or what the writer believes to be the truth; both sides seek nothing but encouragement, praise, flattery.

## I

Before each war Bismarck had known how to isolate the opponent he wished to crush, how to isolate him so

completely that he stood without a single friend in the hour of need. Neither Denmark nor Austria nor France could find an ally when attacked by Germany. Bismarck's diplomatic art and astuteness did the preliminary work — superior munitions and irresistible military leadership completed the German task within a few months.

It is easy to see that Bismarck is no more, and has no successor. While Germany from a military standpoint was prepared for war as no other country in the world, German diplomats had neglected their *terrain* and at the decisive moment enemy after enemy rose against Germany. Germany's army was so perfect that it could challenge a much larger army. German diplomacy had done its preparatory work so badly that four great Powers and several small ones became allies against Germany-Austria. More than half of the world took arms against the two Central Empires. On the two fronts alone France-Russia represents 190 millions against Germany-Austria's 120 millions.

The German Government immediately began to issue White Books to prove the Kaiser's love of peace and his efforts to maintain it — he had turned both to the Tzar and to King George to prevent the European War. Attention was not drawn to the fact that the origin of the war lay in Austria's ultimatum to Serbia (not in Russian or England), nor to Sir Edward Grey's repeated attempts to do everything in human power to

have this ultimatum retracted or postponed, nor to Emperor William's stubborn refusal to lift even a finger to compel Austria to bring the Austro-Serbian difficulties before a European tribunal.

Of course Kaiser William wanted peace; he fondly hoped that Russia would quietly submit to Serbia's chastisement by Austria. In his opinion Russia would be sufficiently appeased if Serbian territorial integrity were respected even if the nation's sovereignty were done away with. He hoped further that even if Russia did step into the ring and dragged France along, England would remain neutral if the integrity of France were vouched for. Kaiser William sincerely wanted peace, or (if he could not accomplish his purpose without it) a short war with France, followed by a rapid expedition into Russia — a quick triumph, in short. His object was peace for Germany and free reins for Austria in the Balkans.

Meanwhile important Germans began to inform the world that the Kaiser had not wanted war. He had always been a pacifist. The war was forced upon him. Half the world was in arms and menacing peace-loving Germany. In their hearts the great mass of Germans knew they had not wanted war but had been absorbed in peaceful endeavour. The nation was taking giant strides in commerce, shipping, in all branches of industry and science. It had built the greatest ships, just as it had the largest universities. It had gradually out-

distanced its rivals in mechanical construction as well as in business initiative. It rejoiced in the progress made in the last generation, and its only ambition was new fields of expansion. And now it was suddenly hemmed in on every side! It was painfully surprised to find itself the object of universal hatred and to meet with an opposition which threatened to thwart its ambitions! Why was Germany hated? Germany, the country which more than any other had made it a point to understand and in understanding to absorb and profit by foreign values and ideals!

And the wise men of science were called to explain to the people. There had been a time when Germany was universally liked, from the middle of the eighteenth century until about 1848. Germany's enemies claim that during this period the spirit of Lessing and Wieland, Goethe and Schiller, Mozart and Beethoven, Kant and Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, and Schopenhauer, Heine and Mörike, dominated. But this was not the real reason. Germany was admired because at that time, in spite of her genius, she was weak and broken — the great German Empire was crumbling; the Rhine "Bund" was under foreign domination and the German states typified indecision and political division. Now, on the other hand, Germany was strong — the greatest military power in Europe — and was hated as the mighty always are; now she was calumniated because of the most despicable jealousy; now she was be-

ing encircled, surrounded by frenzied hatred like the noble stag surrounded by panting dogs.

## II

And from the depths of the German people rose an immense cry of anger. All the apparent and the hidden potentialities within the people surged as in ecstasy at the danger that threatened from West and East and North, from Europe and Asia, and as one great cry from millions of throats rang: "Germany above everything! Watch on the Rhine, watch on the Vistula, watch on the Baltic and the North Seas!" While all the bells seemed to ring.

*Dies irae, dies illa*
*solvet seclum in favilla.*

The first characteristic of the German feeling was a state of general exaltation, the like of which was not found in any other country. This high nervous tension could be noted in every statement from leaders, in every private letter from otherwise peaceful men and women — there reigned an enthusiasm, a self-sacrifice that even carried away opponents like the Socialists in the Reichstag.

While a passive and ignorant army was being driven to the front in Russia — an army of which 79 per cent. could neither read nor write, and while France began

a chase for *les embusqués* — slackers — and while in England volunteers were asked to enter the army for nine shillings a day, in Germany not only conscripts but volunteers, old and young, boys and men past middle age, rushed by the million to aid the fatherland, one and all ready to suffer, to give their lives to their country.

1863, 1870, had not seen such a unanimous burst of self-sacrifice. All phases of intellectual and sentimental life in Germany underwent such a *Steigerung,* worked up to such a pitch that it carried everything before it. Even neutrals on German territory were smitten by it and were impelled to take part in a war which did not concern them, or to give their entire fortunes to the state, in certain cases all they had scraped together during a long stay in a foreign land.

The exaltation seemed to increase proportionately with each additional enemy, and wilder grew the hatred, first for France — who with phrases of republican liberty on her lips had allied herself with Russia, sold herself to the most brutal autocracy of the present day — finally against what an otherwise kindly philosopher, Professor Eucken, in anger calls, " Serbian murder-lust, Russian despotism, English treachery, and Japanese knavishness."

Russia's hatred is no less violent than Germany's. Incidentally it is rather interesting to note that the Russian Tzar in these troubled times has seized the op-

portunity of rebaptising his country's capital. Many consider it wiser to leave geographical names alone; the Tzar is evidently not of that opinion. Now that he is at war with Germany it would have pained him to have a Germanic root in the name of his city.

It is rather surprising, however, that he has supplanted the Germanic word *Burg* by the equally Germanic word *Grad*. *Grad* is our old standby *Gaard*, old Danish *Gardh*, German *Garten*, the same which is found in Novgorod (Newcourt) in Belgrade, Hradschun, etc.; a word brought into Slavonic by the Varangians. Instinctively one wonders what the Russian General *Rennenkampf* is to be called? Surely he too must acquire a Russian name.

It will be remembered that in the days of Alexander III the Tzar upon a certain occasion was present at a review of his guards, and the officers were presented one by one. The first officer's name was German, the second German, the third and fourth also, and only the fifth had one of the beautiful names ending in *of* or *ski*. "Thank Heaven!" cried the Emperor when he heard the fifth name. And yet the reigning Romanofs all come from Holstein.

What is to be done with Russian names like *Todleben*, the defender of Sebastopol? Or *Buxthoven*, the Russian ambassador in Copenhagen? Names of places like *Schlüsselburg*, *Oranienbaum*, etc?

It will be rather difficult to be logical throughout.

In this connection a rather clever German suggested Petrograd should really have been called *Retrograd.*

## III

Soon, however, Germany ceased to consider Russia her chief enemy, and her hatred centred on England, pictured as having rounded up the hounds now being urged on the noble German game. This feeling finds characterisitc expression in statements made by men of standing like Harnack, the distinguished theologian, for instance. "England," he says, "is hypocritical, England is mendacious, England is tortured with envy of Germany, and her actions are based on the vilest passion of greed."

Harnack believes in "moral armies." England has calumniated Germany's "*herrliches and sittenstrenges Heer.*"

When Great Britain declares she went to war for Belgium's neutrality, this is "the lowest of all pretexts." She had no other motive for declaring war than her statesmen's intention to crush Germany or at least weaken it so that England could rule the sea alone. "But why does England want to crush us? Because she cannot bear to see our strength, our thrift, our prosperity. There is no other explanation." And with considerable pride Harnack concludes in the following inspired words founded on Germany's inflated and exalted self-esteem: "If we fall, which God and our

powerful army forbid, then the higher culture of the entire hemisphere goes into the grave with us. . . ." "Great Britain allies herself with Russia against Germany. What does it mean? That Great Britain is tearing down the barrier which has saved western Europe and its culture from the Asiatic desert." Harnack never seems to have heard of Germany's friendship for Russia, which dates from the time of Frederic William III, who a hundred years ago was Russia's greatest ally and friend, nor does he seem to remember that Bismarck, after the most intimate bonds between Russia and Germany had snapped, defended in the Reichstag Germany's association with Russia as "mountain high above all attacks." Alliance with Russia is now opprobrious — the more opprobrious as England thereby betrays her own race.

Germany's prominent men unanimously call England the chief enemy, the great tragedy's stage director. They all consider England and Germany intellectual antipodes.

Germany has always tried to broaden her outlook; Goethe was the first to create the word, "world literature." The Englishman, on the contrary — arrogant, narrow-minded islander — looks out upon the world from the standpoint of a ruler and a profiter.

And by her international cable system England now fills the world with her hypocritical lies. The world is deceived by Britain's mask of "peaceful apostle of

culture and unctuous priest," according to the German Professor Otto Hinze. The celebrated philologist Wilamonitz-Moellendorf joins in the same chorus. "We all know that England stirred France and Russia against us in order to crush us. . . . English diplomacy has always made it a rule to violate all international and individual rights under a cover of hypocritical virtue . . . and now it tries by means of the most infamous lies to stir up the world against us. *Not a true word ever crosses Sir Edward Grey's lips.* The celebrated philosopher William Wundt also affirms — without mincing words — that England fanned the flame which caused the world fire and conceived the "demoniacal plan" of crushing Germany. A sad phase of the war is that it is waged against people of the same race. "Compared to this, what do we care about the Belgians who in their dare-devil blindness seem to have gone to war merely to show the world they were not fit to be a nation!" According to the well-known Franz von Liszt, England has been the motive power in the scheme of encirclement which has reigned since Edward VII. War against such enemies is to him a "holy war." "Our opponent's strength does not frighten us. We must break it; we must win."

## IV

It was necessary *to win at any price.* The English motto, *My country, right or wrong!* had always been

sharply criticised. Now it was tacitly accepted. As Harnack, in an outburst of really Jesuitic ethics, exclaims, "Belguim's fate was as justified as that of the shew-bread stolen by David when starving." There was, presumably, this difference: the loaves did not suffer when they were eaten, whereas the Belgians suffered considerably in being shot.

The Germans did not lack accusations to hurl at England. In reply, for instance, to England's touching solicitude for small nations, Germany asked if England had shown it *vis à vis* the Boer republics, or if at the present time she had ever heard of Finland and the fate which her ally, Russia, held in store for this little country. Regarding England's solicitude about Serbia's sovereignty, it was asked what England thought about Persia's sovereignty when it was abolished by both England and Russia, who divided the country between them. And how about Egypt? In reply to England's assertion that she was fighting for freedom and civilisation it was asked if strengthening the most reactionary autocracy on earth was what England meant by championing liberty and progress.

Never did Germany (any more than France or England) assert that nations are not moved by moral considerations but by political ones. When Germans proclaimed so loudly they had never wanted anything but peace, Bernhardi's and other typical writings seemed to slip their mind entirely. When they claimed to be

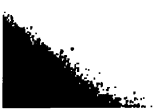
carrying on a war of defence they ignored the propaganda of decades as to the need of an offensive-defensive war.

When Germany spoke of England's attacks on Denmark in 1801 and 1807 as dastardly, 1864 was never mentioned, although, in the history of a people, the monetary loss of a fleet (as inflicted by England in 1807–08) is as nothing compared with the loss of three provinces (taken by Germany in 1864).

When Germany appealed to the sympathy of neutrals because of the overwhelming odds she was fighting against, she seemed to have forgotten that when Austria and Prussia attacked Denmark, this little nation had to fight against odds which, comparatively speaking, were four or five times greater than those which Germany is now fighting. And most assuredly at that time not an eye grew moist in Austria or Prussia in sympathy with Denmark. In other words, German statesmen, as well as English, are actuated by political motives, not by ideals of chivalry or morality. And as statesmen this is probably their duty.

In the meantime with enthusiastic unanimity, forgetting all political and class differences, the German people cry: "We are one and united, we who never before were united. We are united, in the present, and with the dream of our fathers, in the past; we are still Goethe's and Beethoven's people. We are a nation in arms, armed for defence; we are not militaristic nor

are we the enemies of culture. They call us barbarians because they do not want to admit that we are a nation of scientists and a nation of the future. We are the most highly organised nation that exists. We were loved as long as we were weak. Now they hate and envy us because they cannot help admiring us in secret. We are the new forces in humanity, as opposed to France and England's old civilisation. We represent the old, classical civilisation in opposition to Russia and Japan's imitation of European culture. As theorists we are the only nation that knows what thorough preparedness means; and in carrying out our theories we have shown that we possess daring initiative. Not merely in science and in ethics, but in every phase of theory and practice, have we shown ourselves infinitely superior to our enemies."



# CONDITIONS IN RUSSIAN POLAND

(October, 1914)

## I

### Introduction

The immense losses of the war may be easily reckoned. The advantages which are eventually to come out of it, and which the various nations see in their dreams, are too uncertain to be counted on. Yet those who sympathise with the Polish people for their broken national life have seen outlined the possibility of uniting the thrice-divided people as a free state, probably under the protection of one of the great Powers.

But this is still far off, and meanwhile the Poles are obliged to fight in the Russian, Prussian, and Austrian armies; that is to say, against one another. There have been no revolts either in Prussian Poland, the Russian "Kingdom," or in Austrian Galicia. Indeed, one may say that the internal splitting of the Polish people is deeper than ever at the present moment. For the very spirit of the nation seems to be divided.

The only thing that points toward a possible reunion is the manifesto to the Poles made by the Russian Com-

mander-in-Chief, Grand Duke Nicholas, about the middle of August. It began: "Poles! The hour has struck to realise your fathers' and grandfathers' holy dream. Tear down the barriers separating the Polish people! Let it be united under the sceptre of the Tzar! Under this sceptre Poland shall be reborn and free in religion, language, and government." And it concluded: "The dawn of new life is before you. Let the sign of the cross glow in this dawn, as a symbol of the people's suffering and resurrection."

Although this manifesto with its astonishing love of liberty was plainly inspired by the necessities of the moment and in spite of the distrust with which one receives assurances of liberty or reforms made by the Russian Government (since such promises have never been kept in Finland nor in Russia), the appeal made a certain impression. It seemed an expression of the spirit of the times, and of a nature to impress the masses accustomed to hearing the authorities class as high treason the very things which were now called the "holy dream of your fathers."

The purpose of the manifesto was to prevent an insurrection in Russian Poland at a time when enemy troops were entering the country. It seems to have made little impression on the Austrian Poles. As they are independent in Galicia and have witnessed for more than a century the brutal oppression of their brothers in Russian Poland, their reply to the manifesto was a

vociferous protest of fidelity to the house of Hapsburg. Indeed, even the *Sokol* associations which in times of peace (with some final issue in view) had been training young men to sports and the use of arms, offered to form Polish legions to help Austria overthrow the Russians. That was not all. The Ruthenian inhabitants of Galicia (half the population of the country) formed an association for the liberation of Ukraine, and since the 25th of August have flooded Europe with documents and publications of anti-Russian tendencies.

The impression which the manifesto made in Posen is hard to determine, as every anti-Prussian expression would be considered high treason and punished accordingly.

In the meantime, the German Emperor, following Russia's example, has wooed the good-will of Poland and tried to win it over to his side by alluring promises.

A month after the Tzar's manifesto a proclamation by Lieutenant General von Morgen was posted in the districts of Lomza and Warsaw. In it he said, among other things:

"Rise and help me crush the Russian barbarians! They make serfs of you! Drive them out of your beautiful country which must regain its political and religious liberty! Such is the gracious wish of my mighty Emperor!"

When one thinks how cruelly the Poles have been driven from Posen and how ruthlessly their language

has been persecuted, this proclamation shows that the Emperor felt the need of going the Tzar one better.

As far as one can see, the intellectuals in Russian Poland received the Russian manifesto with some incredulity. Russian and Austrian Poland were for a time violently pitted against one another, each accusing the other of having betrayed the fatherland's holy cause, until a new party was formed, politically most undeveloped and therefore extremely popular. Its motto is: "We will have nothing to do with either Russia or Austria. We want one thing only: an independent Polish nation, freed from the guardianship of any other country." In other words, "We want the impossible." A nation necessarily pays the penalty of being deprived of political liberty for nearly a hundred years. Political ambitions under such conditions either degenerate into petty local squabbles and politics, or else remain in a state of perpetual infancy. Why cry out in chorus: "*Polania farà da sé*"? That Poland under present conditions is unable to stand *alone,* is evident to any one with a jot of political insight.

Still I am inclined to say it matters little what forms the desire for liberty may take, since a cleansing storm seems rushing through Polish intellects.

In 1812, too, a bright future seemed to loom for Poland, when Napoleon began the second Polish campaign, and again in 1830 when all Europe sympathised with the Poles, and in 1848 and 1863. But

never have cruel barriers seemed as crumbling as in this present great and terrible crisis, and he who has followed the history of Poland surmises how anxiously Polish hearts are beating, throbbing and glowing with hope and the highest ideals.

Yet at this moment conditions in Poland are more desperate than they have ever been before, even under war or rebellion. And this is not due to the war in general, nor to outside conditions. The Poles themselves are entirely to blame. The wind of nationalistic madness which whirls over the world has poisoned Polish brains, driving out all magnanimity and humanity — not to mention reason (which in the year 1914 has, on the whole, little to pride itself upon in Europe).

I may truthfully say that I have never been so carried away by any people as by the Poles. I expressed my enthusiasm for the country before it became the order of the day and when very few shared my opinions. I had no thought of ingratiating myself with the Poles, or of bringing my book to their attention. As a matter of fact they did not discover it until ten years later, when it was accidentally translated into German. Writing in Danish is, on the whole, like writing in water.

It would be most ungrateful of me, now that I am going to speak sharply to the Poles, if I did not acknowledge the exceptional friendship and kindness I

have met with in Russian and Austrian Poland. There I have found incomparable friends. And for this reason I long refrained from making an unkind remark about the country. In 1898 I refused to act as spokesman for the Ruthenians against the Poles, and made bitter enemies of the Ruthenian leaders who never ceased attacking me, and I was dumb as a wall when Björnstjerne Björnson, shortly before he died, attacked the Poles at the Ruthenians' request. Fortunately his attacks were so exaggerated that they could do little harm. Björnson contended that the Poles were akin to the devil himself, somewhat as he was conceived in the Middle Ages. I knew more about elections and electoral pressure in Galicia than Björnson, yet I remained silent because I considered it beneath me to attack a people placed in a situation so difficult that it could defend minor injustices as necessary expedients. I found it particularly impossible to attack the Poles to whom I considered myself bound by honour, and who filled me with the warmest and most sincere sympathy.

It is therefore with a heavy heart that I am writing these lines.

The very essence of the Russian régime is to deny the Jews all rights. Every now and then Europe is shocked at a very awful mass murder of innocent Jews as in Kishinef, for instance, but even in normal times Russia crowds her Jewish population into the

Polish extremes of her territory, packs them together so tightly they can neither live nor die, forbids all right to move, to study. Even the privilege of studying at schools and universities is denied them over and beyond a much too small percentage. Only Jews with university degrees are allowed to live in the capital; no young Jewish woman is permitted to live near the universities in St. Petersburg or Moscow unless she has registered as a prostitute and received a prostitute's card. Frequently the police drag her to court if she does not live up to her profession but prefers to read learned books. A Jew who is a doctor of laws, for instance, may move to Moscow, and if he is married he may bring his wife along. But if a couple have a child more than two years old, it cannot remain with them. For the child is not authorised to stay in the capital. Neither is it allowed to travel with the mother in cars or railroad. Only by special authorisation can the parents keep the child; and to obtain such authorisation a detailed application must be sent to the Governor-General, who has the power to grant or refuse it.

In Russia the plundering and murder of Jewish inhabitants may in a measure be excused through the peasants' almost incredible ignorance. Maxime Kovalevski, Russia's greatest political economist, told me that when the elections to the first Duma were taking place he learned that every one of the peasants on

the estate had voted for himself. When Kovaleski, surprised, asked them why they had done this, and tried to explain that in this way no one would be elected, they replied by asking if a deputy was not a man who received so-and-so-many rubles a day?

"Yes."

"Do you think we would let so much money go to another when we might get it ourselves?"

The same distinguished man told me that one day he asked some of his peasants whether they had really participated in a pogrom in the neighbouring village. He could scarcely believe it as they seemed so good-natured. To his surprise they replied, "Yes," adding, "You know why." And they explained they had killed the Jews because the Jews had killed their Saviour.

Said Kovaleski, "But that was a long time ago, and not these Jews." The peasants replied in astonishment: "A long time ago? We thought they did it last week!"

It seems they had gathered from the Pope's explanation that the crucifixion had taken place there on the spot, a few days before.

No atrocity causes surprise under such conditions. But to see the hatred of the Jews spread to Russian *Poland* where people know how to read and write, that is unbelievable. Most of the Jewish families in the "Kingdom" have been established there since Casimir the Great (1309–70) out of devotion to his morganatic

wife Esther allowed the Jews to find refuge in his country and to live there under humane conditions. Their numbers increased when the Tzars drove their Jewish population into this territory. What the Jews have suffered during these centuries is inconceivable and even to this day they are cut off from the rest of the world and must wear distinctive dress as the Jews in Denmark at the time of Holberg, and in England in Shakespeare's day.

The Polish Jews, however, have always shared the sufferings of the Polish nationalists. In 1794 a corps of Jewish volunteers fought under Kosciuszko; their colonel fell in 1809. In 1830, however, a bigoted Polish National Government refused the Jews admission to the army. When the Jews later on dared to ask for the same educational advantages as the rest of the population, Nicholas I punished them by banishing 36,000 families to the steppes of South Russia, where they were hit by child conscription. All their little boys from the age of six were sent under Cossack guard to Archangel to be trained as sailors. Most of them died on the way.

Poland's great misery served, for a time, to muzzle the hatred of the Jews which always slumbers in the masses. And Poland's distinguished men tried to prevent it from rising. Poland's greatest poet, Adam Mickiewicz, in his masterpiece, the national epic of Poland, *Pan Taaduez* (1834), made the Jewish inn-

keeper one of the most sympathetic figures in the poem. He is presented in the fourth song as a musical genius, a master of the national instrument, the cymbal, and the poem culminates when Jankiel plays the Dombrowski march for Dombrowski himself. Indeed he history of Poland from 1791–1813 seems crystallised, symbolised in the poem which seems to throb and vibrate with the spirit of the Napoleonic year in which the scene is laid.

At about 1860 Jews and Catholics were equals in Warsaw, and when in February, 1861, the crowds kneeling in the two great public squares singing the national anthem were shot upon by the Russians, the Jews tried by an unmistakable demonstration to show their national spirit. In swarms they followed their rabbis into the Catholic churches, while masses of Christians crowded into the synagogues singing the same national hymn.

This last trait — the two races seeking each other's churches to sing the same stirring anthem — made such an impression on the great Norwegian author, Henrik Ibsen, that he frequently referred to it as one of the most beautiful and inspiring manifestations he had ever heard of.

And now because of the maelstrom of insanity which nationalism lets loose over Europe, all fellow-feeling is lost, and religious tolerance gives way to burning race hatred.

FACTS

In 1912 a deputy from Warsaw was to be elected to the Duma. The population of the city is somewhere between seven and eight hundred thousand, and as the Jewish element numbers about three hundred thousand, it was in their power to elect a Jewish representative. As Polish nationalists, however, the Jews renounced this right. They felt that Warsaw, the capital of the Polish Kingdom, should be represented by a man of Polish race as well as spirit. They simply asked that the electoral committee should nominate a candidate who would not be an enemy of the Jews. The committee arrogantly refused to consider the Jews, or to confer with them, and nominated a decidedly anti-Semitic candidate, Kucharzewski, who had publicly declared he would like to be elected to the Duma in order to rid Poland of Jews.— It is, by the way, interesting to note that the word *rid,* "*ausrotten,*" which the Poles cursed thirty years ago in the days of Bismarck and Eduard von Hartmann, has now acquired a place of honour and glides across their lips with incredible ease.

As the Jews naturally could not vote for such a man, they asked the electoral committee to choose another candidate who would not be opposed to them. This very natural request was curtly denied and Kucharzewski's candidature maintained. The result of this was

that the Jews felt bound to seek another candidate of Polish origin, suited to the office and not opposed to them. In spite of their sincere efforts they did not succeed in finding such a man. At the last moment, after all their efforts had proved fruitless, the Social Democrat Jagello declared he consented to seek nomination as the Jewish candidate.

In their eyes his only virtue was his pure Polish descent. As all the leading Jews belong to the higher middle classes, they did not share Jagello's views, but political conditions obliged them to back him. Lord Beaconsfield always insisted that the Jewish race politically inclines toward conservatism but that short-sighted politicians instead of encouraging the Jews' conservative aspirations, oblige them to cast their votes with the most extreme members of the opposition. Here this fact was proved.

Jagello was elected.

The leading men in Russian Poland who since the beginning of the century had been against the Jews — even if clandestinely, in order not to shock European sensibilities — took advantage of this forced Jewish electoral victory to throw aside the mask and openly appear as violent anti-Semitics. The so-called "co-operative movement" organised during the last twelve years, which at bottom was nothing else than a means of crushing Jewish business, now began to be systematically and cruelly turned into a boycotting of the

Jewish population. In private as well as in public life, the cry rang out: "Don't buy from the Jews! Have nothing to do with the Jews!"

At the head of this movement were Polish intellectuals, some of Poland's most noted writers, among them confirmed free thinkers like Alexandre Swientochowski. Literature shows many conversions, metamorphoses scarcely inferior to those of Ovid, and he who for half a century has been witness to most authors' lack of character is not easily surprised by any renegation. But that I should see Alexandre Swientochowski, the author of *Chawa Rubin,* the most ruthless opponent of nationalism, who in his youth suffered not a little because of his advanced opinions, appear as anti-Semitic leader, that I would have staked my life could never happen. Not only do all Alexandre Swientochowski's writings rise up against him, but all the fiery words which fell from his lips in his days of glory now turn against him.

The entire Polish press gave itself over to this anti-Semitic campaign. Young Polish ruffians were placed before Jewish shops and maltreated Christian women and children who attempted to buy there. By the assistance of the celebrated Dmowski, leader of the National-Democratic party, a new paper, *Dwa Groszi,* was founded which openly advocated pogroms. Bloody encounters soon took place. In the little town of Welun the peasants during the night poured naphtha over the

house of a Jew and set fire to it, and a large family perished in the flames. Similar incidents occurred in various other places, until the Russian Government stopped the pogrom tendency so as not to strengthen Polish nationalism.

Polish priests in the villages stirred the people to boycott and make war on the Jews. After the verdict in the Beilis affair in Kieff, the extra editions of the Polish newspapers agreed that although Beilis was free, the ritual murder had been fully proved (!) *Beilis* is to this day a term of abuse for Jews in Poland.

Under these conditions the Jews in Russian Poland appealed to certain leading men, whose names were so well known or whose character was so above reproach that they could not be ignored. A relative of the great Mickiewicz, Wadislaw Mickiewicz, and a few other prominent men called together a meeting in Warsaw to try to bring about internal peace. In vain he begged and pleaded, at last amid tears, that his countrymen, surrounded as they were by outside enemies, should not go against the Jews who had always been their friends. Not a single Polish paper reported his speech.

All this happened before the war, and the direct result was the economic ruin of the Russian-Polish Jews. But during the war the hatred for Jews has flamed up again, and so far the Russian Government has not done anything to stop or put out the fire.

During the mobilisation several Polish papers, the

*Glos Lubeski,* published in large type the alarming news of " Immense Pogroms against Jews in England. The English Government makes no effort to stop them." The lie was evident. But the object was to establish a precedent.

When gold and silver grew scarce owing to the war, Polish papers accused the Jews of hiding the precious metals. Investigation proved that several non-Jewish business people (the rich Pole Ignaszewski in Lublin, for instance) had secreted sacks of gold and silver. They were severely punished, of course, but not a single Jew was found guilty of any such action.

Nevertheless the Jews were accused of having smuggled a million and a half rubles of gold into Germany in a coffin. And while the Jewish representatives and priests in Warsaw protested, and their protest was printed in Russia, it was not carried in a single Polish paper.

All this led up to pogroms. Many other preparations were made. The anti-Semites had a proclamation printed in Yiddish wherein the Jews were urged to rise against Russia. They had this bill posted in the streets of all the different towns and placed in the pockets of unsuspecting Jews; those who distributed the papers then signalled the victims to the police. All who were found with the proclamation in their pockets were shot on the spot.

Finally, as in the Middle Ages, the Jews were ac-

cused of polluting the wells. If a few Cossacks or other Russian soldiers died, the Jews and their poisoned wells were blamed.

The principal accusation was, nevertheless, that of espionage. It was made to serve when Austrian troops conquered a town or a village as well as when Russian troops drove away the Austrians. The result was the same in either case. A certain number of Jews were conscientiously shot by Russians or by Austrians. Lists of those really guilty of espionage were compiled. Aristocratic Polish names were on this list — a Potocki, for instance, who was doomed to death; but the list did not contain a single Jewish name.

Accusations against the Jews are generally thought true, however, as the Jew for nearly two thousand years has been called a Judas.

The Judas legend may without exaggeration be called the most imbecile that ever sprung out of the Dark Ages, and that it ever found credence is a proof of humanity's indescribable simple-mindedness. Few legends so clearly bear the stamp of falsehood and few have caused such a sum of suffering and horrors throughout the centuries. It has martyred and murdered hundreds of thousands.

The very foundation of the story is impossible. According to it a being with supernatural qualities, a god or demi-god, day in and day out wanders about and speaks in the open air in a city and its environs. He

makes so little attempt to hide that he entered the city the previous day at noon under the acclamations of the multitude. He is known by each and every one; by every woman and every child. Not alone does he not hide, but wanders about, followed by disciples who preach during the day, and at night he sleeps in their midst. And it is supposed to have been necessary to bribe one of these men to point him out and to betray him — and for effect — by a kiss! If he had been hiding in a cellar there would have been a reason for such a legend. But as things were, those who sought him need only to have asked: Which of you is Jesus? He would not have denied his name.

Judas is therefore not only more superfluous than the fifth wheel of a wagon, but an absurdity, sprung from the desire of placing a dark traitor of night in opposition to the white spirit of light. It also springs from the growing Jew hatred of the early heathen-Christians, who eventually succeeded in making people forget that Jesus, all the apostles and all the evangelists, as well, were Jews just as much as this Judas.

Throughout the centuries, nevertheless, Judas — as the name reads — has become the Jew, the traitor, the spy, in the minds of the masses.

Even as recently as the nineties Captain Dreyfus fell as a victim of the same old legend.

Now it is being boiled over again to serve against the Jews in Russian Poland.

By means of this Judas and many other frightful accusations *pogroms* have spread over great stretches of Russian Poland. Galicia and Posen have so far been unaffected by the agitations of which there has been no dearth. Many hundred innocent people have been sacrificed. A few examples among the many.

In the city of Bychawa, which was taken by the Austrians, some leading Polish citizens took sides with the Austrian leaders and accused the Jews of having a secret communication with the Russian army. Consequently the Austrians shot a sixty-seven-year-old man by the name of Wallstein and his seventeen-year-old son. When the Austrians were driven away shortly after this the same Polish citizens informed the Russian commanders that the Jews in the city communicated with the Austrians and had given them supplies so as to deprive the Russians of them. As a result many Jews were shot and their houses burned.

In the cities of Janow and Krasnick the Jews were accused of having laid mines to harm the Russians. The Jews (among them many children) were hung on telegraph poles and the two cities were destroyed.

The city of Samosch was conquered by Austrian Sokol troops, these handsome and lithe people whom no one can forget if he has seen them exercise in their capital in Galicia. When the Russian army reconquered the city, the Poles accused the Jews of co-operat-

ing with the Austrians. Twelve Jews were arrested. As they denied their guilt, they were doomed to death. Five were hung. In the midst of the hanging a Russian pope, with a picture of the Madonna in his hand, came and swore the Jews were innocent and that it was all an outburst of Polish Jew hatred. He proved that the Poles had helped the Austrians and that they even had telephone connections with Lemberg. The remaining seven Jews were acquitted. But five had *already been* hung.

In the city of Jusefow the Jews were accused of having poisoned the wells so that a hundred Cossacks lost their lives. Seventy-eight Jews were killed, many women violated, houses and stores looted.

Similar occurrences happened and are happening daily by the hundred. In this way greater or smaller pogroms with ensuing murder, rape, and loot have raged in the communities of Warsaw, Radom, Petrikow, Kelts.

Only a few Russian governors like Korff in Warsaw, Kelepovski in Lublin, or the governors in Wilna, Petrikow, and Grodno have, rather late, it is true, tried to protest against pogroms; but neither the Government nor the Poles take their admonishings to heart.

Eye witnesses have told me of Jewish soldiers in various hospitals who have grown insane not from the unavoidable horrors of war, but from seeing pogroms in cities through which they marched. In their delirium they confuse the victims with their own dear ones whom

they imagine violated or murdered. Their delirium always centres around the same subject.

The Russian Poles' anti-Semitic campaign is all the more odious since 40,000 Jewish soldiers, among them many volunteers, serve in the Russian army and as the Jews' contributions to the army and the Red Cross are boundless. In larger communities special hospitals for Russian soldiers, without regard to creed, have been founded by Jews with Jewish money. Not a few Jewish soldiers have received the highest decorations. Some have even been awarded by Commander-in-Chief Rennenkampf, who is an active anti-Semite. Russian authorities on the whole are anti-Semite. The proclamation from the Tzar to my "dear Jewish subjects," which has been printed in the French papers, has never been anything but a parody.

While the standing accusation against the Jews in Russian Poland has been that of sympathising with the Russians — which they would, it seems, have no special reason to do — A. Warinski recently reversed the accusation in *Politikken*. "Germany's attempts to conciliate the Poles influenced only the Jews who are *psychologically related to the Prussians* and inclined to side with them." This would seem the climax. The Jew is and must be a Judas. If this is not proved in one way, it is proved in another. Not with one word does M. Warinski mention the number of Jews who have voluntarily enlisted because of enthusiasm for

Poland. These Jews could not believe — as I, for one, refuse to do — that this outburst of nationalism in Russian Poland is anything but a passing epidemic.

In the long run how could the Russian Poles be unfaithful to the only powers they can count on — call on! How could they, who are fighting for liberty, after years of oppression turn and oppress the only race that (for its misfortune) is in their power! The only race that has suffered a dozen times more than they! And the only one that is so *strong* it *cannot be crushed by oppression.* How can the Poles, themselves ruined by the treachery of the confederation of Targowica, accuse as traitors the one race which never has been untrue to itself, and which, even in its deepest misery, has never betrayed the Slavs who, in the Middle Ages, gave refuge to its children?

Probably, in reply to my appeal to the Poles, it will be explained it is because of my race that I now make this appeal. Personally my descent has influenced me so little that I have been frequently attacked in national Jewish papers and magazines as a renegade of racial ties and faith.

Even last spring during my stay in America I was perpetually attacked in the Jewish-American papers as the "callous renegade of the Jews." That was all nonsense, as are most printed assertions, but at least it shows that it is not because of my *blood,* but because of my *opinions,* that I now raise my voice. My sympa-

thy is not for the Jews as Jews, but for the *oppressed* and *suffering*.

It was I who wrote a generation ago: "One loves Poland, not as one loves France, or Germany, or England, but as one loves liberty. For what does it mean to love Poland, but to love liberty, to sympathise with suffering, and to admire courage and glowing enthusiasm! Poland is a symbol of everything loved by the best in humanity and of the ideals for which humanity lives and has fought."

Those were my words, and I have stood by them until now.

Must I be ashamed of having written them, now that Poland's future is hanging in the balance?

# CONDITIONS IN RUSSIAN POLAND

## Incitement to Pogroms

(February, 1915)

Since the stirring of national hatred has succeeded in turning Europe into a madhouse, a house of mourning, a hospital, a cemetery, and a bankrupt estate, one would at least think that some sort of an internal peace would reign within the boundaries of the different countries participating in the war.

This does not, as I have explained in a few other articles, apply to the Russian Empire, although France and England are obliged to inform the world that Russia is also fighting for liberty and justice. Yet since the war Russia has suppressed the workingmen's press, dissolved the labour societies, imprisoned five members of the country's Duma, sent Finland's most prominent statesmen to Siberia, led the Poles on by vague promises — which were not even made by the Tzar himself but by a commander whose words bound no one — and organised a persecution of the Russian Jews which is worse than any former one. The number of Jews fighting in the Russian army is calculated to be between a quarter of a million and 400,000, yet the Government is careful not to accord the Jews a single right.

Neither does it allow them to escape from the territory where they have been told to reside; that is, in Poland and the Lithuanian provinces. When boundless misery and hunger oblige the Jews to abandon their homes, they are driven back by Cossack patrols or soldiers. Jewish soldiers more or less convalescent are sent from the hospitals to their "homes" which are in ruins. It even happened that a nineteen-year-old volunteer from Charkov, whose face was half torn away and who was to have been operated on by Dr. Hirschmann, was put out of the hotel before the operation took place and had to leave the city because he was a Jew or of Jewish origin. And while the war lasts no one whose father or grandfather was a Jew is allowed to enter the military school for officers.

In Poland a series of pogroms have taken place since the beginning of the war. The Jewish population has been looted, abominably treated, and in many places murdered. Furthermore, the inhabitants have been evicted from territory they were previously allowed to live in; they have been driven out on twenty-four hours' notice. About 1500 families were thrown out into the streets in Grodzisk, a city in the neighbourhood of Warsaw I know very well, while everything that was left in the houses was stolen and destroyed. The Jews have been expelled in this way from eight cities, fleeing to the capital where they were not allowed to remain.

If the rabble in Russian Poland, as elsewhere in Eu-

rope, were filled with a violent hatred for the Jews, this would not lead an author (who doubtlessly more than any other foreigner has shown his devotion to the Polish people) to accuse the Poles. If the pogroms sprang from the masses there would be nothing to say against them. Conditions would then be the same in Poland as in Kishinef and other places in Russia.

But that which has impelled me to protest is the immense difference between Russia and Russian Poland. *While in Russia all the greatest writers and men: a Vladimir Korolenko, a Leonid Andrejev, a Maxime Gorki — all the intellectuals, in short, take up the cause of the Jews and look upon the excitation to pogroms as a crime and a shame, Polish intellectuals, men like Nemojewski and Schwientochowski, have stepped into the breach as leaders of the movement against the Jews. They have thereby proved how far Poland is behind Russia in real culture.* Poland's leading men act as if it were the duty of the intellectual élite to drag down instead of to uplift.

# POLAND

(November, 1915)

Countess Julie Ledochowska, who is to speak at the Concert Palace about the sad fate of her country during the world war, is a woman who has devoted every day of her life to her country and her people. As so many of Poland's wonderful women, she is Polish to the marrow, and the more passionately so as her people still remain politically weak. She belongs to a celebrated Polish family. Her uncle was the famous Cardinal Ledochowski, who as the archbishop in Posen-Gnesen refused to submit to Bismarck's May laws. He had been made archbishop in 1866 in the hope that in return he would quell the national agitation in Posen, but Bismarck's fight against the Catholic Church brought him in the first ranks of the opposing party and he had to spend the years 1874–76 in prison. In 1875, Pius IX, who was very fond of him, made him cardinal.

The Countess is not entirely Polish. On her mother's side she is a descendant of the noble old Swiss family of Salis in Graubünden which has several branches — one of them during the Revolution gave a highly respected officer to the French Kings' Swiss Guard. But the power of entirely absorbing half-foreign elements,

which is so characteristic of the Polish people as it is of the Hungarian and the American, is shown in the case of Countess Ledochowska who feels entirely Polish and nothing else. Her family has to this day a highly esteemed name in the Catholic world. Her brother is the Jesuit commander.

As far as one can judge, it seems that the Countess will dwell particularly on the sufferings, misery, and anguish which the war has brought upon Austrian and Russian Poland where the battles of the Eastern front have taken place. She hopes to move her audiences to help in some concrete way to relieve the misery which now for more than sixteen months has ravaged the population.

She has not led the idle life of a society woman. First in Galicia and then in Russia, and after her expulsion from Russia in Finland, and after her expulsion from Finland in Sweden, she has entirely given up her life to the education of young Polish girls. She is filled with the only valuable idealism, the *practical* one, and looks upon conditions in Poland not from a political point of view but from a human one.

As I have said, it is from a fundamentally human standpoint that Countess Ledochowska looks upon conditions in her fatherland — in other words, she, who is good herself, speaks to others in a language of kindness.

Therein lies — strange as it may seem — something unusual for our day.

He who remarks how, on the sixteenth month of the war, the conflicting peoples, each and all, are convinced they are fighting for justice and truth against falsehood and oppression, while they all simultaneously massacre each other by means of most frightful inventions, cannot help feeling that man by nature is a vastly more sophisticated devil than the one whom Goethe characterised in Faust by the celebrated lines:

*"Ein Theil von Jener Kraft*
*Die Stets das Böse will und stets das Gute Schaft."*

Man, or at least the spirit of the nations, is quite different and much more terrible. He and they are part of that force which

*"Stets das Gute will und stets das Böse schafft."*

For all belligerent statesmen, strategists, officers, and soldiers, as well as generals and admirals, colonels and naval commanders, all, without exception, day in and day out, only ask to do the right — but their good intentions are expressed day in and day out by an uninterrupted series of horrors, atrocities, and slaughter in proportions the world never dreamed of. The fight for the good has had the certain result of causing the most awful evil which one would think inspired only by the wildest lust of bloodshed and destruction.

As conditions in Poland have a political as well as a human side, it may not be amiss to add a few polit-

ical remarks to the Countess's essentially human viewpoint.

As will be remembered, the present campaign was begun by a manifesto made by the Russian Commander-in-Chief Grandduke Nicholas Nicholaijevitch to the Poles in Russian Poland. It promised the fulfilment of their national dreams in the form of a not very clearly defined autonomy. How much this implied, what its limitations would be, was not stated. That the Russian Government did not take this manifesto seriously was shown when the Russians took Lemberg and classed the territory as " old Russian land."

Temporarily, however, the manifesto served to separate the Poles. In Galicia, Polish legions were immediately formed and for months they fought bravely in the Austrian army.

In the Russian " Kingdom " of Poland, on the other hand, one party believed in the liberation of Polish territory and its reconstruction through Russian victories — or if it did not believe the manifesto it at least pretended to do so in order to take Russia at her word. This party did not feel Polish as much as Slav. Another party, if given a choice, preferred Russian autocracy to Prussian, for while Russian authority is more cruel it is not so thorough. It may be more barbarous, but it is less systematic. It contains loopholes through which one may breathe because its outline is less defined. And one advantage is that pressure can always be re-

moved in Russia by adequate bribing, while the methodical Prussian bureaucrat is an incorruptible, fundamentally honourable, governmental automaton without human weaknesses and without human virtues.

The war has levelled the differences between the Poles, who counted on Russia, and those who hoped for eventual reunion by means of Austria and Austro-German victories.

But enough differences remain; the Poles are obliged to fight against one another in the armies of the different powers; but since the Russian armies have been driven out of Galicia and the "Kingdom" of Poland has been conquered, the question of a Russian "orientation" as it is called, has been silenced. The Central Empires and the Poles who favour the Central Powers have the floor.

And they take advantage of it. Germany alone publishes a large Polish weekly, *Poland,* while the smaller review, *Polnische Blätter,* appears three times a month; and there is a deluge of polemical writings and a swarm of pamphlets.

One would think that from all these it would be possible to obtain some light as to political plans and events.

But this is very difficult. Most of what is published bears the official stamp. The few paragraphs purporting to be unofficial are published under a wakeful censorship and are inspired by the authorities. At the present moment Europe has joyfully accepted Russian

standards in regard to freedom of speech. Intellectual life is not allowed free expression. The teacher cannot even rely on " historical " facts. There is lying, glossing over, erasing, omitting, inventing, and double dealing to please one political faction or another.

As Galicia is the only part of Poland where the inhabitants were allowed human rights, it was natural to look upon Galicia as the kernel of Poland reborn. The Poles of the " Kingdom " and Prussian Poland were to be united with it and all were to acquire the same political independence and autonomy. The possibility of uniting Galicia and the " Kingdom " under an Austrian archduke as Polish regent was discussed in tête-à-têtes — the regent's name was even mentioned. But this project was soon abandoned. For Prussia, unless it changed its character completely, would never allow a free Polish state in its neighbourhood.

In August the German Chancellor made a speech in which he published a programme, as it were, of the future policies of the German Empire. Two points deserve special attention. The first, that Germany " is the defender and protector of the rights of small nations," and secondly, that the German conquest of Poland meant the " beginning of a movement which would do away with the diffierences between Germans and Poles, and lead Poland, freed from the Russian yoke, into a happy future where it could cultivate and give full expression to its national life."

The words were chosen with care and revealed the Chancellor's intention not to commit himself. Yet the speech was surprising, and if a personality backed the words, and if they were spoken in earnest, they implied nothing short of a revolution in German and especially Prussian politics.

If Germany intended to allow the Poles, liberated from Russian authority, to develop their national characteristics freely, it could not refuse the Poles in Posen, Schleswig, West and East Prussia, the same rights.

The Chancellor should merely have supplemented his speech by an explanation as to how such a changed course could be taken, since it would be in direct opposition to the customs and traditions of the German Empire. Besides, while the "Kingdom" is quite Polish and Galicia is evenly divided among Poles and Ruthenians, one-third of the inhabitants of Posen are German, and in Prussia no less than four million Poles are mixed with eight million Germans. It would be very hard to single out the Poles, and if, when Poland were reconstructed, they were not singled out, it would be very hard to rule, let alone satisfy, them.

For the moment Poland's conquerors are silent as to the future destined for the country. They are busy reconstructing it materially. There is nothing to hint that they intend to grant the people's wish and unite Poland, but much seems to prove Austria's and Prussia's

desire to concede Polish language every right which it hitherto has been denied in universities, schools, and on the stage. The authorities have also asked for Polish co-operation on several public questions.

Until the terms of peace are definitely settled it is difficult to pass resolutions or make promises for the future. And before political reforms are to be thought of, there is more than enough to do economically and materially.

The traditions of 1812 which obsessed Russia to such an extent that she in all seriousness looked upon the Russian retreat from Galicia and the "Kingdom" as strategetical moves comparable to those of a hundred years ago — those traditions are responsible for Russia's almost insane destruction of every city and territory abandoned by her armies. The Russians drove out the entire population. Polish Catholics and Jews were forced into the interior of Russia or sent by train all the way to Siberia in the most barbarous way. For three to four days at a stretch the unfortunate people were locked in and penned together in baggage and livestock cars, without being permitted to leave them even to seek food. Every day many died from this treatment. The dead were thrown out of the cars and were heaped along the tracks, or the bodies remained in the cars which stopped at the stations while no one was allowed to go out. Assuredly the Jewish population which has been persecuted and abused on the strength of

a two-thousand-year-old hatred was particularly subjected to this brutality. Yet Catholic Poles have also suffered inhumanly, and they deserve all the sympathy which misery excites.

Never have the inhabitants of Polish territory had such an untold sum of suffering heaped upon them as now when the possibility of Poland's reunion shines before their eyes as not too far distant nor too uncertain. In 1866 I wrote: "Although the Pole is hopeful by temperament the utter impossibility — at least according to mortal eyes — of finding a way out of his desperate plight preys on his mind lilke a nightmare. There would seem to be no solution of his difficulties except that which might arise in the problematical event of a great war between Russia on one side and Austria-Germany on the other."

What I, almost fifty years ago, wrote vaguely, apprehensively, has now taken place.

So far, as I said above, this fight for the good cause, however, has had the certain result of an uninterrupted series of disasters and an endless chain of horrors.

# POLAND

Lecture delivered March 13, 1916

The nations outside the war-storm, which rages over the earth and its gardens, watch with bated breath the spreading of ruin and destruction.

Every day brings fresh horrors, which please the victors and which cripple or destroy the defeated.

That is all we know for certain about this war in which a truth-killing censorship and the violent articles of fanatic journalists keep the public absolutely ignorant of what is really happening. There is bloodshed at the front — hatred in the press.

How much longer can it last? How long can general mass murder and systematic destruction ravage the earth?

We see sorrow, suffering, and mourning wind Europe in a black shroud.

We see poverty, hunger, and despair rise and spread over Europe like ghosts dancing in a circle as the witches on the heath in *Macbeth*.

What is Europe? Transformed into hundreds of battlefields, thousands of cemeteries and hospitals, one enormous bankrupt estate, and one immense insane asylum.

The actors as well as the spectators of the huge tragedy have been taught from childhood that a supernatural and wise destiny directs the world. And they believe that everything, even that which seems most desperate in our eyes, is for the best. They ask in deep anxiety: What good is to come out of this?

Theologists and philosophers have ready answers.

They say a new era will come over the world, courage and virtue will take the place of luxury. From the thunder of cannons, the clash of firearms, from bursting grenades and exploding mines, from machines that spread burning liquids or poisonous gas over what was previously called fellow men, now the enemy, they claim, will come what is called justice.

Most people believe this because philosophers as well as ministers and poets have impressed it on them. And young people wishing to appear thoroughly up to date are convinced they are "modern" when they profess optimism.

Few are they who know that humanity is worth more than nationality. Few who know that where hatred is sown nothing but hatred can be reaped.

Few they are who feel, as it says in a little Swedish verse I have read:

"I saw innocence crushed under foot,
I heard might admired,
Truth despised,
Then my blood boiled.

Now I have quite ceased to be surprised,
When everything flouts simple, common sense,
I know right is crushed under foot
In spite of prayers and tears,
I know life's law is hard and not good."

And yet — if in the midst of this temporary reign of horror one sees a gleam of light,— uncertain and flickering though it may be,— this is when poor Poland's future is considered. Most assuredly not its present. For rarely, perhaps nowhere on earth, has misery, "all mankind's misery," of which Faust speaks, been united as in Russian Poland and Galicia.

In the first place these countries have been ravaged by the impersonal element called war — by three great powers, three million soldiers fighting each other, billowing back and forth, leaving behind corpses, epidemics, men crippled and mutilated — three real great powers: Hunger, Sickness, and Sorrow.

Added to this has been the personal element called cruelty. It has helped to drown in misery three populations: the Polish, the Jewish, and the Ukrainian, and unfortunately it has also led the majority of the inhabitants to persecute the minority, so that hatred and brutality triumph here as everywhere else.

War — cultural power, it is claimed to be! — has made everything poorer and more sordid — everything is brutalised, militarised, clericalised, nationalised, over all the earth.

And yet for the first time in a hundred years the outlines of the Poland, which long was a dream picture, seem at last to become real. We see the shimmer of an independent Poland, to be sure not as extensive as Poland in the days of its greatness, but still a Poland where the Russian "Kingdom" and Galicia, at least West Galicia, are to be united and given as much independence as small states are allowed to have.

Probably few among us are old enough to remember the enthusiasm which fired the Danes at the time of the Polish Rebellion in Russian Poland in 1863. Not only the young but the old, not only women but men, throbbed with hope when the ship hired by the Poles landed at Copenhagen, and the flock of young warriors, who hoped to reach Poland from our country, spent a few weeks with us equipping and arming themselves.

I seem to see them at the "Students Association"— young, brave, inspired — I see the most admired and the most dashing, Stephan Poles, who in spite of his courage and his leadership did not prove worthy of the task. To see and talk to these men was like kindling the torch of liberty for the youth of that generation.

And some of us, a generation later, proved our devotion to Poland and the Poles.

During a visit to Warsaw in 1886 I visited the painter Koloszinski. He showed me his collection of old Polish gold and silver brocaded scarves, and I, while examining and toying with one of them, suddenly seemed to see the

sumptuous civilisation of aristocratic Poland of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries glow with life before my eyes.

I seemed to see the higher brotherhood, the *Szchlata,* of voivodes, hetmans, castellans, bishops — all these magnates in their *sukmas* and *kontusz's* of velvet and silk with the vivid red breeches and the wide waist bands — and I felt how all this splendour symbolised the proud and passionately independent nation's aristocratic love of life and beauty. He who had such a gold-brocaded scarf wound many times around the body carried with him a continuous impression of beauty, of luxurious well being. And the rare beauty of these embroideries corresponded to the aristocracy's boundless hospitality, its tendency for lavishness in eating and drinking, its ethics of princes.

I seemed to see the graceful elegance of its women, its Catholic culture filled with joy of living, like champagne punch, seasoned with a dash of holy water. And as the women were taught to love high ideals and grace, so the men were trained to heroic courage. From childhood they were filled with a love of liberty and worship of the rights of the individual even to the politically insane extremity of the *liberum veto.* One dissenting vote was enough to prevent any common decision.

Polish civilisation, which, in Copernicus, gave the world its fundamental law, and under Sobieski defeated the Turks and saved Vienna and Europe, shone even in

the days of its decadence, under August the Strong of Saxony, who reminds one of the drunken and dissolute Hercules of a Greek satire. It culminated in modern days in Chopin, whose music is both Polish and European.

Beautiful and rich was the Polish garb in peace. But even in war old Poland was a feast of splendour. In battle Polish knights had great wings on their coats of mail. It is easy to understand that the *panache* was ever present.

In Cherbulliez's *Ladislas Bolski,* which is supposed to render a typical Pole's lightness and weakness, the dazzling attraction of splendour is expressed in the son's love for the father's red and white plume which he always carries about with him.

It is typical that one of Poland's greatest poets, Julius Slowacki, in his poem *Beniowski* gives this conception of God: "He is not a God of worms or of creatures that crawl. He loves the flight of gigantic birds and the mad gallop of storming horses. He is the dashing feather on proud helmets."

No one except a Pole would define the Deity so.

When Polish decadence and the politics of Catherine II led to the first division of Poland, in 1772, the feather on the helmet sank midst the clash of arms.

The brilliant decadent and aristocratic republic of thirteen millions had only 30,000 quite independent magnates in a *Szlachta* of scarcely a million. The

lower aristocrats were entirely dependent on them, and to an even greater extent the peasants. In Poland, as in Iceland and France under the old régime, the lords exerted their influence over a population of miserable tax-ridden serfs or slaves.

After the first division the Poles bethought themselves. The best instincts rose within them. They had been obliged to give up a population of five millions. But Poland was not yet lost. In 1789, the same year as the French Revolution, they decided to change their constitution. The elective monarchy with the remarkable and unfortunate *liberum veto* disappeared and gave way to a hereditary monarchy, to religious liberty, to the right of free citizens to vote, to the power of the majority, the independence of the judiciary, and a relative protection of the peasant class against the arbitrary power of the lords. The constitution of May 3, 1791, shows Poland's earnest desire to create a modern state.

Poland's star was rising again.

Great English statesmen, opponents like Burke and Fox, called this constitution a work in which the friends of liberty in all countries must rejoice.

Then Catherine II interfered, in 1793 Russia would not sanction a free and powerful Poland. Frederick William II of Prussia, who had first agreed to recognise the constitution, went back on his word and allied himself with Russia to divide Poland. Traitors among

Poles of the higher aristocracy like Felix Potocki and Xavier Branicki formed the confederation of Targowica, in order to preserve the *liberum veto,* and handed their country over to the partitioning powers.

Then Kosciuszko made his brave revolution, was tragically defeated, and Poland was divided for the third time in 1796.

During Napoleon's campaign in 1806 and 1812 the Poles again began to hope. Their first advances were ill rewarded by Bonaparte. Although Polish legions during the Italian campaign in 1797 fought side by side with the soldiers of the French republic, and Dombrowski saved the French many a hard blow, Napoleon was not kind to his Polish allies. Yet they formed new legions, and under the Consulate took part in the battles of the Danube and in Italy. Here it was that Wibicki's famous Polish national anthem was created for Dombrowski's soldiers, the *Jescze Polska:* "Poland is not yet crushed. *Marche! Marche! Dombrowski!*"— No one was as faithful to Napoleon as the Poles. At the last extremity, in the most desperate attacks or whenever the Emperor's own salvation was at stake, the Polish lancers were called.

On Napoleon's lonely sleigh-ride during the retreat from Russia he was accompanied from Smorgoni in — 35° Fahrenheit by a hundred Polish lancers, who, the night before, had volunteered to act as guard. Only 36 of them were left the next morning. When Moreau in

1814 made the mistake of surrendering the fort of Soissons, the 700 Poles of the garrison had resisted a besieging army of 50,000 men and would have held the fort until Napoleon's arrival if Moreau had not lost his judgment and allowed himself to be trapped.

More recently in the nineteenth century Europe has been reminded of Poland by the revolts of 1830 and 1863. Traces of the sympathy created in all European countries by the revolution of 1830 may still be found — mostly in France, of course, for Polish emigrants of that day fled to France as to their home, and Poland's greatest poet, Adam Mickiewicz, was appointed to the College de France and lectured there for the cause of his fatherland.

The revolution of 1830 found echo in Germany too. I need only to refer to Börne's *Paris Letters,* to Herwegh's poems *For Poland* and *Poland to Europe,* to the four beautiful poems by Moritz Hartmann, and to the whole collection of August von Platens' *Polenlieder:*

*"Die Lüfte wehn so schaurig,*
*Wir ziehn dahin so traurig*
*Nach ungewissem Ziel.*
*Kaum leuchten uns die Sterne*
*Europa sieht vom Ferne*
*Das grosse Trauerspiel."*

In Norway, Welhaven wrote his unforgettable poem: "At the Barrière of La Cité, Lies a Humble Little Café." The silent Pole rises midst the noisy students

who drink to Poland and bares his chest. "You fools, those are the scars of Ostrolenka. . . . Do you realise how they burn?"

In Denmark, Hauch by his thousand times sung: *Why does the Vistula River Swell?* shows how deep is the sympathy for Poland as Astrup by a *Polish Mother.* When the father is to be shot she holds her child high in the air, that the dying man may see him:

"Cast your eyes upon him, and
With the force and the strength
Which death alone can give
Consecrate him to vengeance!"

The revolt of 1863, which I began by discussing, gave birth to much beautiful Northern poetry.

Carl Snoilsky's half dozen poems, among which the most striking doubtlessly is *On Poland's Grave,* describes Poland as "the empty spot in the lap of Europe."

"Though the world were a garden of roses
And honey flowed from wonderful goblets,
A monument of shame would seem
That empty spot in the lap of Europe."

No one can say what will be the outcome of the war which crackles all over the earth. But no matter how it ends, it would seem as if Poland in one way or another will be reconstructed.

For the moment, however, Poland is still an empty spot in Europe's lap.

During the war, the press of the belligerent countries has succeeded in exciting to an unknown degree the most horrible of all powers, national hatred — hatred which is not founded on a person's faults or crimes, but on his race or birthplace — idiotic race hatred and national hatred. This hatred is the political factor which prevents peace.

But behind the nations and over the nations stands humanity and humanness.

And behind national hatred and above the national hatred the love of humanity still exerts itself.

It is human love that strives to diminish the sufferings which national hatred has caused, and to heal the wounds it has caused.

## THE CONQUEST OF BASRA

(November, 1914)

The importance of the recent English victory at Basra has been said to reside chiefly in the moral effect it will have on the Eastern peoples.

But it would seem of much greater importance, from a practical point of view, provided the conquest could be maintained after the war.

* * *

As Germany could not secure profitable colonies in East and West Africa she began to seek an outlet toward the East, and was so successful in Asia Minor that England began to feel acutely menaced.

In the eighties Bismarck declared the Oriental question — referring to Turkey and its fate — was of no interest to Germany and not worth the bones of "a single Pomeranian grenadier." But for more than a dozen years Germany's influence has been decisive at the Bosphorus, while France, during her necessary but badly conducted campaign against the Church, neglected the Christian protectorates in Turkey and Syria which she had maintained for centuries. During this time the Kaiser made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem (1897) and

while officially appearing as the defender of the Christian communities in Asia Minor sealed a solemn alliance with the Sultan whose hands were still dripping with the blood of 300,000 Christian Armenians.

The alliance between the Half Moon and the Cross did not seem to benefit Turkey to any great extent. It did not prevent the Italians from taking Tripolis, nor the Balkan States from defeating the Turkish army. Yet the German alliance survived the fiasco. It had long ago given Germany the concession of the Bagdad Railway, which has been a turning point in modern German history.

* * *

The story of the Bagdad road is an example of the way in which the fate of nations depends on a few men — diplomats and ministers — who, in reality, are but the mouthpieces of the large banking and industrial concerns. The masses have not the slightest voice in directing the policy of their country, in making war or peace, and this is as true of a parliamentary country like England, a democratic country like France, as of Germany, Russia, or Turkey.

In olden days when nations lived by agriculture they went to war to gain territory, to wrest land away from their neighbours. Now that the nations have become industrial states and are in reality ruled by financial oligarchies even if they nominally appear to have em-

perors, kings, or presidents, the purpose of war is no longer to conquer land or peoples but *markets*. Each nation wants a wider outlet for its products, greater investment for its capital. The real character of war today is not a fight for ideals but a fight for concessions.

Japan made war on China in 1895 in order to dominate Korea; the United States fought Spain in 1898 to gain access to the riches of Cuba; England attacked the Boers in 1899 because of the Transvaal mines; the Powers stormed China in 1900 in order to force railways upon her; Japan declared war on Russia in 1904 to gain certain advantages in Manchuria. The conquest of territory was an incident; what the victor sought was railroads, loans, tariffs.

Now during the nineteenth century England controlled the industry of Europe by means of her coal and iron as well as by her spirit of enterprise and her unrivalled sea power. France alone was a feeble competitor and after the Fashoda incidents she dropped out of the race. But then a new rival suddenly appeared: Germany, which until 1870 had been an agricultural nation. She began to abound in foundries, mills, chemical works, and shipyards; she acquired new railroads, new canals, and even a budding navy.

At first Germany's industrial attempts caused no uneasiness in England. But as the years passed and the Germans progressed, England discovered that many an article supposed to be of home manufacture was Ger-

man in reality. And as German consuls and German salesmen were active in every part of the world, England and Germany soon began to conflict everywhere, in Brazil as well as in Asia Minor.

The first move in this international game of chess was Joseph Chamberlain's attempt to strengthen the bond between England and the colonies by abandoning free trade and introducing a protective tariff for the mother country and the colonies. But the idea stranded on the opposition of the English working classes.

Then Edward VII planned to encircle Germany by a network of allied powers. He came to France in the second year of his reign as soon as the Boer situation was cleared.

* * *

About this time — 1902 — the German Government, having obtained the concession of the Bagdad Railway from the Sultan, tried to bring about a financial understanding with France.

The Bagdad railway was to unite the suburbs of Constantinople with a German port on the Persian Gulf and as first planned it was to have followed the old Roman road, creeping around the Taurus Mountains and linking together the flowering cities in the plain of Nineveh. This line would have been the shortest and the cheapest. But Russia protested, since it would favour the rapid transportation of Turkish troops and in

case of war would threaten Russia's Armenian and trans-Caucasian provinces. The German company therefore had to follow a southern route, that taken by Xenophon's Ten Thousand, which afterwards branched off across the Taurus into the plains of Mesopotamia.

The German-Anatolian Railway Company also secured concessions to the side roads already in operation. The two most important belonged to French companies. These were bought. One of these controls the direct line to Smyrna; the other leads to Adana and the port of Alexandrette. Finally the German company obtained the rights to the long important line which was to connect Aleppo, Damascus, and Mecca, and which would be used by all pilgrims going to the Prophets' City.

By means of all these railroads Palestine would become a sort of German province. A network of tracks would have gleamed between Mecca and Constantinople, and would have united Smyrna with the Persian Gulf. One of the terminals would have been twelve hours from Egypt, the other only four days from Bombay. The road would have brought Bagdad five hours from Constantinople instead of fifty-five days, and made it possible to transport Turkish troops easily from the centre to the most distant parts of the country. There would be rich harvests of corn and cotton on the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates; a new way would be opened up to India, and the value of the Suez Canal would be incalculably decreased. Turkey would become an eco-

nomic vassal of Germany and England's domination in India would be severely menaced.

* * *

As Germany did not have the requisite capital, she turned to France and a Franco-German company was formed. The president was Arthur von Gwinner, president of the *Deutsche Bank* and the vice-president was a M. Vernes, an associate of the Rothschilds in the *Compagnie du Nord et du Midi.* On the board of trustees he also represented various banks and interests: the *Union Parisenne,* the *Banque Ottomane,* the *Salonica-Constantinople Railways,* etc. Back of him were financial authorities like Rouvier.

As soon as this financial understanding had been reached between France and Germany, a diplomatic *rapprochement* was inevitable. It must be remembered that in France, as in all other countries, the financial and industrial interests are centred in the hands of a very few men who practically control the nation. As a Frenchman writing under the pseudonym *Lysis* proved in a remarkable series of articles published in 1906–7 in *La Revue,* France is practically governed by three or four affiliated banks and establishments of credit who control the wealth of the nation and invest it without giving any real account of their operation and without taking into consideration the interest of the nation or any but their own. Ministers of finance never attempt

to interfere because the few men who control the banks also control the Government. They have made the good-will of the politicians worth while and have won the press over to their side. And when these men had determined to co-operate with the German bankers, the two nations had to become friends again. The first steps were taken. Jules Lemaitre, who at that time had not become a nationalist, proposed that by-gones be by-gones and advocated friendship with Germany.

At this England began to show signs of nervousness. For a long time she had been competing industrially with Germany and had not emerged undisputably victorious. She maintained her supremacy because of her wealth and capital — not on the industrial *terrain*. If Germany were to secure the backing of French capital, she would become a very serious rival.

The consequence of the Franco-German understanding was King Edward's visit to Paris in 1903 — as stated above.

As an onlooker in the crowd I witnessed his reception and was struck by the rather uncertain attitude of the masses. The tension between France and England was still strong after the Fashoda incidents. During the Boer War, which had just ended, sentiment in Paris had been entirely for Kruger.

But now King Edward appeared as the old friend and admirer of France; as a man he had the Parisian associations of the Prince of Wales back of him; as a

diplomat he knew what he wanted and was bent on making use of every opportunity to insure England's supremacy in her competition with Germany. He realised it would not be very difficult to stir up the old French grudge against Germany, the hatred from 1870–71.

During his stay in France King Edward met Delcassé, who for about eight years had directed the foreign policy of his country and who was delighted at the thought of co-operating to encircle Germany. In 1901 he had been to Russia to strengthen the Russian alliance and he was *persona grata* at St. Petersburg; he tried to dissolve Italy's connection with the Triple Alliance and he was active in Constantinople; he was on hand wherever he thought he could further the interests of France by means of an isolated Germany.

King Edward's stay in Paris was well spent. The day after he left for London it was announced that M. Vernes and his associates withdrew from the Bagdad company and that the Franco-German company was dissolved.

* * *

It seems as if the conquest of Basra is England's first step to thwart Germany's plans in Asia Minor. The outcome of the war alone will decide whether the Bagdad Railway is to be completed by Germany or the other Powers.

* * *

The Bagdad Railway — incidentally — is one of the many threads which, bound together, have forged the cable which brought on the war,— this war for business, for enriching bank directors and kings of industry. It rages madly while Europe's unhappy and peace-loving peoples, artificially stirred by national hatred, believe they are fighting for ideals of liberty and justice.

The war for trade is costumed as a defence of the fatherland — of that fatherland which statesmen in every instance could have guarded, strengthened, enriched, and developed to the highest degree of civilisation without the use of a single torpedo, mine or grenade.

## THE GREAT ERA

(May, 1915)

How often we hear that we are living through epoch-making days! That the war marks the greatest events in the history of humanity, since never before have human lives and material values been counted on such a scale. All this may be true, but, personally, I do not see facts in this light. I look upon great inventions that benefit humanity — steamships, locomotives, telegraphy, electricity, aëroplanes, etc.— as factors which create epoch-making days. But I cannot conceive continuous wholesale murder, egged on by the vilest and most rabid stirring of national hatred, as creating a great era, if by great one implies *valuable*. Of course it may be claimed that the magnitude of the ideals fought for, not the magnitude of the damage done, makes the present war great.

There have been other wars inspired by lofty motives, such as the war of Napoleon III on Austria to free the Italian provinces from foreign domination. But as a general thing, wars are not waged for ideals but for profit. Economic competition is always tense between nations, and the object of an open break between them is to gain undisputed power, supremacy.

All of the belligerents are convinced that right is on their side, and the leaders of public opinion impress this on the masses in their respective countries. The people in every country, therefore, believe they are fighting for right and never doubt that Heaven owes them victory. They all frown on neutrals, whom they despise for being unable to see right on one side only. They who are fighting for their lives are not receptive to arguments, and it is futile to answer their attacks.

Among the nations suffering from the war, three have been very sorely tried: Belgium, Poland, Armenia.

Belgium's fate outraged the world, both in Europe and America. It went against all sense of justice, was in direct opposition to all right. That neutrality guaranteed by the Powers should be completely disregarded and that the maintaining of this neutrality according to international honour should be the cause of all the horrors from which civilised peoples thought they had evolved, shocked the conscience of the world.

Yet it was not for the sake of Belgium alone that England went to war. August 2, Sir Edward Grey promised M. Cambon that if the German fleet entered the Channel or began to operate against the coast of France the British navy would come to the assistance of France. This was an inimical act to Germany before Belgian soil had been violated by German troops.

The sudden tragedy which befell the Belgians melted into one all the various elements which had hitherto

conflicted. The French-speaking Walloons and the Flemish, whose language does not differ materially from the Dutch or the Low German, have forgotten their dissensions and become one people. Before the war the Walloons felt mentally and linguistically related to France, while the Flemish had a penchant for Germany. Whether the Germans will be able to retain possession of Belgium after the war is a matter of conjecture; but it is certain that whatever influence Germany may have had in Belgium before the war has now been completely uprooted. The Belgians are a stubborn race, unconquerable by force, as the Spaniards learned in their day. And while Belgium may be physically under the German régime, she has never been so intellectually free from German influence as to-day. Belgium's two greatest poets, Maeterlinck and Verhaeren, who had the keenest sympathy for Germany before the war and who had been honoured in Berlin and Vienna, have turned against Germany with the greatest violence, and their example is typical of the feeling of the whole country.

From the very first the Allies gave the war a programme. They were fighting for *right*. The programme was rounded out in such a way as to crush Germany's domination and her thirst for power, and every possession recently acquired by Germany was to be taken away and restored to the original owner. France was to get Alsace-Lorraine; Denmark, North Schleswig; the unfortunate, thrice-divided Poland was

to be united and self-governed under Russian authority. This last promise was made in a proclamation by the Russian General-in-Chief, but has never been confirmed by the Government or the Tzar.

What has happened, however, is that Poland has suffered more since the beginning of this war than Galicia had suffered since 1846 and Russian Poland since 1863. And the country had had its share of misery before the war. But since the war, Poland has become one immense battle-field where Austria and Germany are fighting the Russian masses. Eastern Galicia, which enjoyed a measure of independence under Austria, is now under the knout. The Ruthenians, (who while oppressed in Russia had been free in Austrian Galicia) are deprived of the right of speaking their own language by their Russian "saviours." They number thirty-six millions and are not considered a nation.

In Russian Poland, the "Kingdom," stands a German army. While fleeing before the devastating, invading army, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, mothers and children, have lost each other and have never found each other again.

Although they are of the same nation and race, Russian Poles are obliged to fight against the Austrian and German Poles, for they are disguised as each other's enemies.

And in this unhappy country there are, besides the

Poles, between five and six millions of the world's most oppressed race, the Jews. Abused by all sides, forming an immense proletariat which Russian barbarism has herded into a narrow territory where they have no means of sustenance, they have since the beginning of the war been the choice butt of religious and race hatred combined. They have no human rights. And whatever evil and suffering is let loose upon them, is made to appear well deserved because of a two-thousand-year-old sin. Since the conquest of Jerusalem the Jewish race has never suffered as to-day.

Meanwhile Armenians are being exterminated by the most frightful deportations to the desert, by massacres without end. More than 800,000 of this Christian people have been killed on Turkish soil.

The great days we are living through are, therefore, days where old prejudices, race hatred, and national hatred have been stirred to life and become omnipotent. Everything bestial in human nature spreads and stretches itself. Murder all night and all day, unceasing, is weakening European and Asiatic nations — their youth is sacrificed on the battle-field, and the people at home perish from sorrow, want, and starvation.

And this is the result of humanity's gospel for nineteen hundred years: Love your neighbour as yourself!

It is inevitable, that the very young who have never

seen war before and who have been taught that something good comes out of everything, even from the worst, have faith in the coming peace.

As for me, I am convinced that future generations will look upon the great days we are living in as we look upon the days of witchcraft and the Inquisition.

# NEUTRALITY

## An Open Letter to Georges Clemençeau

(February 28, 1915)

*Dear Friend:*

Your remark about the Danes, that they are a *nation without pride,* has made bad blood in this country and has wounded me personally. A writer of your rank should refrain from derogatory expressions about a whole nation, especially since such generalisations never hit the truth, no more than one strikes a butterfly with a club. You doubtless remember Renan's words on the subject.

You attack Denmark's neutrality in the bitterest and most offensive terms. You ascribe it — since the country cannot have forgotten the mutilation Germany submitted it to — to fear and cupidity. I, who, if I may say so, cannot well be suspected of any desire to enrich myself by it, would consider Denmark's participation in the war as madness. Through your paper, which I read, I know you feel that Denmark ought to declare war on Germany. As long as there is a grain of sense left in a Danish Government, this will not happen.

No Dane who lived through 1864 could ever forget that Denmark then lost two-fifths of its territory; nor that Prussia and Austria stripped us not only of the territory which, from a national if not from a political point of view, they may have had some right to, but in North Schleswig annexed territory absolutely Danish in language, character, culture, and feeling. We have not forgotten, either, that the promise of 1866, by which the Danes of North Schleswig were to be given the opportunity of becoming Danish again, was never kept. And we have (with deeper interest and a more quickened feeling than the French) witnessed the German régime's increasing and incessant persecution of Danish language and spirit in North Schleswig.

Nevertheless, some of us still retain a fragment of political insight, and they would regard a Danish declaration of war on Germany as sheer madness. The war of 1864 was *not* declared by *Denmark;* it was accepted because of Denmark's naïve and misplaced confidence in an English promise to the effect that Denmark in case of war *would not stand alone.*

If proof of modern statesmen's political negligence and lack of foresight is desired, the attitude of France and England during the war of 1864 is a fertile study. France, then dominated by Napoleon III, believed she was pursuing a wise policy in supporting Prussia, hoping naïvely that Bismarck might sometime do her a good turn therefor; and England, without the slightest

protest, allowed Prussia to acquire the port of Kiel. If to-day Denmark has neither a fleet capable of offensive action nor a boundary which can be defended, this is due to England's and France's attitude in 1864. If attacked, Denmark would of course be obliged to defend herself as best she can. But she is quite unable to take the offensive.

The few Danes who have tried to enrich themselves duirng the war without regard to the country's weal or its repute abroad have been punished officially by the law and unofficially by public opinion. They do not deserve the slightest notice, and the Danish people should not be blamed for their upscrupulousness.

Dear Friend! Your articles against Denmark have, it seems to me, sometimes had a personal sting. Once you said it was characteristic that I had not spoken of the war in a private letter to you. You spoke of this publicly, designated me clearly even though you did not mention my name. I received numerous letters from France. If I wrote you briefly it was simply in order to save your time and mine. In your article: "Reflections on Neutrals," there is also a passage which many think refers to me. It speaks of one of the "most celebrated thinkers" in that Scandinavian country which has suffered most from German brutality. A Russian journalist repeated to you certain remarks which the thinker in question is supposed to have made about Germany, Belgium, and Denmark, and you take

the thinker to task for these second-hand, verbal remarks.

Would that you could read Danish and not always be obliged to rely on second-hand judgments! Besieged as I have been since the beginning of the war by foreign and also Russian journalists, I have had but one thought, and that was to keep away from them. Even as influential a writer as *Novoje Vremja's* correspondent has knocked at my door in vain. I have never said a word of what the Danish thinker in your article is supposed to have said, and I feel sure that no other thinker, answering to the description, would ever have expressed himself as affirmed by you.

The warm friendship which has bound us for many years, and which, from my side, has never been broken, makes me wish to answer you briefly and clearly, as one would answer a friend and a man who hates futilities and circumlocutions. I know your love of truth and your highmindedness. If you have expressed yourself inconsiderately about Denmark it is simply because you do not know our language and are not familiar with our conditions.

In old friendship,

G. B.

## Reply to Georges Clemençeau

(March, 1915)

When the war broke out Denmark declared herself neutral, and a proclamation from the King, calling upon the population to refrain from any demonstration which would increase the difficulties of the Danish Government, was posted on the street corners. If this request was addressed to the average citizen and the nameless Danes in Europe and America, it had special reference to the few who are generally known and who in the eyes of the foreigner are looked upon as representing the people. Not for an instant did I doubt that, I, personally, must obey the command.

Added to this was a factor which I referred to in a private letter to you, but without such details as one would give when writing for publication. You did not quite grasp the sense of it. Allow me here to remark incidentally that according to my lights and also according to English customs, it is not good form to lay before the public any part of private letters written in entire confidence and trust. I do not owe the public an explanation for the reasons I gave for my reserved position.

You seem to imply that it was of importance to me to have my brother retain his ministerial portfolio. Personally I have not the slightest interest in whether my brother remains cabinet minister or not. He has been

minister before, and he may become one again later. What had importance in my eyes, however, was not to create difficulties for the Danish Government (i.e., for the moment *Denmark*). The most trifling act could do so, and create confusion abroad. And this might happen very easily as my brother and I have the same name. It might be thought that I was speaking for my brother, or that he shared my views.

When you say that a minister's portfolio in Denmark is of little consequence compared with Louvain, Dinant, Reims, I must heartily agree with you, and your suggestion would have struck home if by protesting I could have prevented the destruction of these cities or a renewal of the bombardments. Of course the German actions were outrageous; but if I were to protest against every injustice that I witness I should never do anything else. That I am no timorous or prudent person, afraid of raising my voice when I believe my words can be of assistance or prevent injustice of cruelty, I have proved a hundred times over; and if you knew my writings as I know yours, you would not accuse me of the one thing which does *not* apply to me. A single example: As a friend of humanity, you protested against the massacres of the Armenians by the Turks and the Kurds. You protested in print and in France. I, however, protested as a *speaker* in 1913 in Berlin and in German, when the German Government was the ally and defender of Turkey.

Regarding Denmark and Schleswig, I have expressed my opinions so frequently (they may be found in my collected works), that I cannot very well be accused of trying to get away from what I have said.

Neither have I ever retracted a single word of what I may have said to you at our annual meetings in Karlsbad, as you seem to infer. Allow me, however, to remark that we last met there in 1909. At that time the European situation, such as it is to-day, could scarcely be imagined, let alone discussed.

My open letter to you dwelt on one point only. You had called the Danes " a nation without pride "— an insulting word which you now try to gloss over but which was the cause of my protest. Imagine any one calling the French such a thing! Your articles contained a few other disparaging remarks about the Danes. It was impossible for me to consider a phrase such as: *ils se terrent dans leur trou* (they hide in their holes), except as a hint that Denmark ought to declare war. You made it seem as if the Danes lacked moral courage in not declaring war on Germany. And you repeatedly dwelt on the pitiable figure the Danes would cut at the peace negotiations when they would ask the Allies for the restitution of the Duchies (Holstein, Schleswig, Lauenburg).

This remark alone shows that you have no idea of Danish conditions. No Danish person with any political insight entertains such a wish or would make such a

demand. Denmark does not wish to acquire a population which would be annexed under protest only, and which would become Danish only by force since its majority is German speaking and German spirited. What the Danes have demanded since 1864 is the restitution of the Danish-speaking and Danish-thinking population of Schleswig. But we would gain nothing by the restitution of even this province if we were to obtain it by humiliating Germany. For the simple reason that Germany would then seize the first and best occasion to avenge herself and deprive us of it. This Denmark could not prevent. The possession of Danish Schleswig can be secured only by peaceful negotiations with Germany.

It must also be admitted that one must possess an object before being able to dispose of it. So far Germany rules in North Schleswig — not the Allies. Imagination runs riot in belligerent countries. French and German papers refer to what they intend to do quite as if they had already obtained that which they hope for. The belligerents are all optimists. But the spectator may look upon the struggle in a more doubtful light, especially as events seem to confirm his pessimism. I, for my part, am not sanguine. I do not for a moment imagine that this is to be the last war or even a decisive one.

Your letter ends — in a not quite friendly way — by putting me through a cross examination. I am not fond

of inquisitions, even when clothed in civil forms, and I scarcely ever reply to the questions which European papers often address to me.

The purpose of your cross examination seems to be to reveal my underhandedness to the French people, and your questions remind me of the saying that a wise man can ask more questions than seven ordinary mortals can answer.

There are very few problems in the world which can be answered by an absolute "yes" or "no," unless one is allowed to state the questions oneself; for the way the problem is set, determines the answer.

I have expressed my sympathy for France so many thousand times, both in words and in writing, that not a clear-minded person can doubt it. My sympathy for Belgium's frightful and undeserved fate does not spring from the fact that as the inhabitant of a small, neutral country, I regret that neutrality, even guaranteed, cannot be assured, but from the fact that I have a beating heart. My entire moral makeup makes me want Belgium and France freed from the enemy.

Since you insist, I must admit, however, that upon this occasion, as otherwise in life, I do not give myself over to longings nor to prayers to higher powers. I examine conditions and try to understand them. When you ask me who is in the right, you simplify matters so that I cannot follow you. I wish, for instance, the French all luck and success; but I would consider it a

great blow to civilisation if Russia were to stand with the palms of victory in her hands. It would mean strengthening reaction in Russia and would fill with despair any lover of liberty for peoples or individuals.

To you the whole problem seems simple and clear. Right, truth, liberty on one side; injustice, oppression, barbarism on the other. If I have disappointed you so keenly, it is, perhaps, because unlike the schoolmaster in Renan's *Caliban,* my name is not "Simplicon."

The appalling part of a war like this is that it kills all love of truth. France and England are obliged to gloss over the Russian Government's ignominious dealings in Finland, its treatment of Poland, which it promised to reunite, and where it begins by announcing that Galicia is not Polish but old Russian territory, while it tears down Ruthenian signs in Lemberg and puts Russian ones in their place. In the same way Germany explains away the atrocities committed by German troops. Bedier's pamphlet on the atrocities is treated as a philological essay; the inaccuracies of the translation are discussed while the accusations regarding the atrocities are ignored.

All belligerent nations appear to be in good faith. Not one doubts for an instant that its cause is the just one and deserving of victory. All hope for victory and are confident of winning. Perhaps even the governments are in good faith, to a certain extent.

I for my part look upon the increasing national

hatred that is splitting Europe as a sign of an immense reaction. You want me to look forward to the Allies' victory. The problem is too complex. I could, as I say, not rejoice at Russia's victory and still less at Japan's. Not that I have any prejudices or any feeling against Japan. I admire the great qualities of the Japanese, whose form of religion, to begin with, is much superior to that of Europeans. But the Japanese, who are racially kin to the Chinese, will probably as a result of such victory eventually dominate the white race, after having wrenched away all its Asiatic colonies. And as Japan's culture is not founded on Greece and Rome like ours but is different and foreign to ours, I would consider such an issue intensely tragic.

You will cry: "And you would expect good results from an Austro-German victory!" Not for a moment. The organisation of which Germans are so proud has been obtained by crushing individualism, which is essential and precious to me, and their unity has been obtained by oppressing the Danes and the French who are now obliged to fight and bleed for a state to which they belong against their will. The Prussian Government has shown that nothing is to be hoped from it. The Reichstag during a recent session refused to amend the exceptional laws governing annexed territory just as it refused to amend the mediæval electoral laws of the Prussian Diet.

But what if neither side were to win a decisive vic-

tory? Suppose that all these horrors lead to nothing but a *partie remise* as every indication seems to show?

In regard to England I look upon her in the same light as one of Great Britain's ablest men, E. D. Morel, very popular in France, where I have heard him speak. He has a French mother and an English father and is therefore half French. Be it said to his honour that he lost his seat in Parliament because at a time when no one cares for anything but flattery, he dared speak the truth, and stated that certain high officials had not told Parliament the truth regarding the origin of the war, for which every country blames its opponent.

I should like to bring this discussion between two men equally intent on seeking truth, back to one fundamental question.

In my opinion, statesmen are not inspired by ethical considerations but by political expediency. Even if they speak in the name of morality and assure us that they are fighting to further ethical issues their object is not moral but political advantage. In fact, I am inclined to think that as the world is constituted to-day, it is their duty to be inspired by political and not ethical motives.

When France conquers Morocco the object is not moral but political. When England and Russia divide Persia between them, their object is not moral — the action itself is, indeed, highly immoral. I look upon the German invasion of Belgium in the same way — as

an outrageous injustice — a political expedient. The two are often synonymous. As this move had been long foreseen, however, and discussed in the military periodicals of many nations, foreseen even by a layman like myself (who spoke of it in lectures in February, 1914), one is less surprised that it occurred than that France had not prepared the slightest defence. The English recently presented King Albert with a beautiful book, to which prominent English authors and many foreigners contributed. Would rather they had prevented the fall of Antwerp!

You, my dear Clemençeau, have turned this quite objective discussion into such a personal issue that I feel obliged to add a few words as to my personal feelings.

I am indebted to Germany because, when forty years ago I was obliged to leave my country for five years' exile, she welcomed me with the greatest hospitality and never let me feel I was a stranger. German opinion turned against me only when I protested regarding Schleswig. Since then it has been rather unfavourable to me.

I am still more indebted to England, where I have been received as in no other country, and where I have been met with greatest kindness and cordiality. I could not forget or go back on England without being guilty of the vilest ingratitude.

I am most of all indebted to France, however. For my whole education is French. Although I have sought

and culled knowledge in many places, everywhere I could, the form in which it has been absorbed, my intellectual processes, that is, my entire mentality, I owe to France. In no country have I lived as willingly. I do not lack feeling, as you infer that I do, nor is it true, as you advance, that I do not care what happens to France. My entire sympathy is with her. I believe you are the only one of my French friends who has ever doubted it.

But I wish to state that I have a very high regard for the writer's calling. If he is not truth's ordained priest he is only fit to be thrown on the scrap heap. The writer dare not, in order to ingratiate himself with a people or a class, even with his own people, go back on his ideals, no matter how unpopular they may be, nor let down on them, nor pretend that he sees them realised where they may be only hazily guessed. It is not the writer's duty to speak at all times in order to remain in the public eye. It is not his business to applaud, protest, condole, when he knows his words have neither weight nor influence.

He must remain silent where silence is golden. And if he speaks, he must look truth in the face,— that same truth which is smothered by stupidity in times of peace, and drowned by the thunder of cannon in times of war.

## WILL THIS BE THE LAST WAR?

(August, 1915)

The three Scandinavian countries are forcedly neutral. Any participation in the war would jeopardise their national existence, and no compensation could be offered for such a risk. But they do not look upon the war from the same angle.

Norway, because of her old relations and sympathies with England and France, is most drawn to the Allies. Yet a few Norwegian intellectuals, whose books are published in Germany, have placed themselves passionately on Germany's side.

As Sweden fears Russia — with reason, for Russia abolished the Finnish constitution and flooded Sweden with Russian spies — the Swedish upper classes are pro-German to a certain extent.

It is self-evident that Denmark must maintain an absolute neutrality. The distance between Kiel and Danish territory is covered in two hours, and we could have the German fleet outside of Copenhagen within two hours after a declaration of war. Denmark could not provoke a power like Germany without committing suicide. Half a century ago Denmark was assailed by

the united forces of Austria and Germany, and resisted a whole year without the slightest assistance from any European Power. This example (quite superfluous, it is true) shows the incredible short-sightedness of English and French diplomats who, without protesting in any way, allowed Germany to acquire the port of Kiel and to annex two-fifths of Denmark's territory. Since that time these provinces have been ruled as the Germans rule all conquered territories. Danish must not be spoken in churches or schools; Danish colours must not be displayed, not even in women's clothes; expulsions and vexations are the order of the day. For years parents were deprived of their children if the little ones were brought up in the respect of Denmark and Danish traditions. The Reichstag has voted appropriations for buying up Danish land in Schleswig, and Polish land in Posen. Young Schleswigers are obliged to fight and bleed in the German ranks for a fatherland in which they are treated like outcasts.

For weighty reasons, therefore, Denmark cannot sympathise with Germany. Yet Germany's organisation inspires respect. If, beyond this, Danish intellectuals are not unreservedly for the Allies, the reason is simply that they cannot look upon the Allies as forming one solid block. In spite of all attempts to gloss over the differences in the nation of the Entente, the neutral observer cannot regard them as imbued with identical ideals.

For it is absolutely impossible for a human being who knows something besides what he reads in the papers, or for any one who has travelled, studied or acquired some knowledge of European conditions, to sympathise with England, France and Russia at the same time. The very things which inspire his feeling for England and France make him turn away from Russia — and vice versa. The reactionary and conservative elements throughout the world — those who hate democracy and worship autocracy, not enlightened autocracy, but the insidious, dark one — naturally hope for Russia's victory. On the other hand, all who value constitutional liberty, humane government and real enlightenment sympathise with France and England.

But only those who have been blinded by national fanaticism can sympathise with both the East and the West. The very elements for which Germany is hated are even more exaggerated in Russia — the East — while Germany, on the other hands, has many of the attributes which impel one to sympathise with the West — England and France.

Of course ignorance and falsehood have formed an alliance to explain away the Russian Government's most hideous crimes, just as Germany's violations of law and justice are painted as something absolutely unheard of, the like of which no civilised power has ever been guilty of. Such explanations impress only those who are as ignorant as new born babes (although it is not to be

denied that the majority in most countries undoubtedly are in this state of semi-intentional ignorance). The sound sense of the masses and their intuitive conception of right have never been anything but a democratic legend.

For the masses believe, as a rule, every lie that is cleverly presented to them. They believe, as "eye witnesses" claim to have seen, a Russian army passing through England in September, 1914. They believe what a few Danes insist they saw, Belgian children in Copenhagen, with their hands cut off. Of course there were no such children in Copenhagen. The English minister, J. F. Matthews (Baptist Church, Sheffield), declared from the pulpit in March, 1915, that a Belgian girl whose nose had been cut off and whose body had been ripped open by the Germans, had now recovered and was living in Sheffield. The whole affair proved to be a flight of imagination, but it was given general credence.

The affair may be classed with the telegraphic report that Kaiser Wilhelm decorated the Almighty with the Iron Cross as reward for His invaluable assistance in Belgium, Northern France, and in East Prussia.

To a certain extent the European press is not entirely to blame. No one is allowed to speak the truth about the political situation.

The belligerents — none of them — allow truth to find expression. Every time Truth tries to rise out of

her well, an ever vigilant censor immediately ducks her head under water again. Truth is smothered as one smothers an unwelcome kitten. The object of the censorship is to prevent the publication of any material which might convey information to the enemy. But it has another mission: that of stifling criticisms of the army or the Administration, no matter how justified they may be, and to present everything in a rosy light to the native reader.

Even in small neutral countries laws have been passed to prevent the publication of remarks which might imperil neutrality by offending a belligerent country.

The United States constituting a great power, beyond reach, and in no danger of attack, is the only country where a neutral writer can say what he believes to be true.

I witnessed the War of 1870–71. I was in France and Italy at the time and read the French papers carefully. They never spoke the truth, of course. The truth was too sad. One of the duties of the press was to infuse confidence into public opinion and to stimulate it during reverses. Finally, however, part of the truth leaked out, and the losses had to be admitted. But all the articles were characterised by one phrase, "At least we may be consoled by the thought that this is the last war."

Since then there have been a dozen bloody wars, and now the worst of them all has lasted a year. And still

the imbecile refrain rings in article after article, in all countries, "At least there is consolation in the thought that this will be the last war."

That is to say, from next year on humanity will change its very nature. Its boundless stupidity will become reason: its unlimited ferocity will turn into gentle and peaceful good will.

The Germans deny the atrocities in Belgium; the Russians deny the atrocities in East Prussia; the Austrians deny the atrocities in Serbia.

Even if many reports of the atrocities may be imaginary or exaggerated — and this has been proved — there is enough left. And I, for my part, do not doubt the brutality of all sides. I know the Germans are civilised, the Russians good-natured, the Austrians smart. But war brutalises every one. If murder of the so-called enemy is made the order of the day and the destruction of his cities and fields a holy duty, then all the worst instincts are given free reign everywhere. From under the varnish of civilisation the cave man rushes forth, and his status is that of the Stone Age.

A pessimist once remarked that humanity is "a gang of brutes." He was mistaken. Humanity is divided into a series of different gangs, all fighting each other, and each one trying to beat the others.

As this motive is never admitted, all nations purport to be fighting for ideals. Each of the warring parties is fighting for right, truth, order, or liberty. Even a

despotic country like Russia is fighting for liberty, even for the liberty of Poland, which it has systematically and relentlessly crushed by means of the most ingenious tortures during the last half century.

In short, every state proclaims the high ideals it is fighting for. All without exception are fighting for their own defence — to protect right; their right.

Of course they do not feel impelled to make right prevail. *My country, right or wrong!* suffices. Each nation fights for itself. In these days when patriotism is praised as the highest virtue, the spirit of world citizenship is the object of deepest scorn.

In the lulls between wars, humanity imagines it is at peace at last and that no more wars will arise. Humanity does not want and does not dare to look truth in the eyes. If war breaks out, in spite of optimistic assertions, humanity reacts and cries that after *this* war justice and peace will reign. Every war is to be the last war.

## THE PRAISE OF WAR

(September, 1915)

The peculiarly refreshing thing about the average mortal is his inability to understand even the simplest thought.

Instead of feeling hurt or aggravated thereby, the philosopher should give himself up to the sheer artistic pleasure of comparing the individual's complete mental helplessness with his self-assurance in judging, condemning, perorating, with unbounded pride.

When I wrote some time ago that Denmark would gain nothing by acquiring North Schleswig if the German Empire were humiliated so that it would be filled with revenge and a determination to seize the provinces again at the first opportunity, a cry rose against me in the Danish and the French press. Esteemed "fellow citizens" attacked me in the back in French papers. I have been positively bombarded with insults in anonymous and signed letters. Not only am I accused of having shown myself up as an immeasurable coward, but, as insidiously suggested by Clemençeau, I suffer from a peculiar mental aberration. I seem to nourish a sort of idiotic fear that Germany be humiliated. As

if Denmark had not been humiliated, France humiliated, etc.! A physician must feel as I when all the patients in an insane asylum scream that he is the insane man among them.

The student of humanity cannot doubt but that the war madness which rages all over the earth is a relapse to the oldest hereditary instincts. It goes back to the Stone Age. The old Mexicans worshipped the war god above all other gods. He was the supreme protector of the tribe. In all Egyptian literature there is not one word of criticism against war. In old Hellas, war was the normal relation between cities, and it was an accepted fact that whenever a city was conquered all the men were killed and the women and children carried away and sold into slavery.

In old Israel, Jehovah desired war and wished it carried out in the most merciless way. If a king spared his enemies he was accused of disobeying the prophet, whereas he was considered dear to God's heart if he exercised the most ingenious cruelty.

Without knowing anything about these precedents, the old Vikings, a couple of thousand years thereafter, on their expeditions to England and Normandy, were equally convinced that their gods were pleased by their warfare. In the Christian Era victory — no matter how it may have been won — was always considered the judgment of God, a sign of divine grace, and a proof of the justice of the cause. The vanquished had to be

content to let their priests explain the defeat was due to their past sins and God's wrath therefor.

Victor Cherbulliez once calculated that from the year 1500 B. C. to about 1860 A. D. about eight thousand peace treaties had been signed, each one supposed to secure permanent peace and each one lasting on an average two years.

A peace treaty does not guarantee peace. Neither does a convention signed by all the Powers. Machiavelli once said something which all the sovereigns and statesmen of to-day seem to bear in mind: "A prudent ruler does not keep his word if by so doing he goes against his best interests, or if the reasons which induced him to bind himself no longer exist." One would think Machiavelli had foreseen the year 1914. Another political essayist, the English Major Steward Murray, completes Machiavelli's remark: "The European waste basket is the place where all treaties sooner or later find their way. It is unwise to allow one's fate to depend on something which will probably find its way to the waste basket."

National security is not to be had by treaties. Nor yet by war. If this had been the case, the war of 1871 would have settled the problem of Alsace-Lorraine. Security is only to be had when the *difficulty is resolved in a way which both parties consider just.* This solution does not satisfy "pen heroes" whose number is legion, but it does satisfy human beings, and fortu-

nately their number is greater. And I for one have a sincere and not wholly unjustified hope that eventually common sense will dominate and that the logic of things will prove more powerful than the madness of fanatics.

From a former article several papers have concluded I consider the struggle against war hopeless and even regard war as a beneficent power. In the article I merely hinted that this might not be the last war and that it might not usher in a reign of justice on earth.

I simply meant that human nature evolves very slowly for the better. By nature man is but a higher sort of beast of prey, an evolved ape.

But let no one believe that I imply humanity will *never* rid itself of war. One thing, however, is sure. The methods used by the nations hitherto do not bring them nearer the goal.

The Allies claim in chorus that the object of the war is to crush Prussian militarism. But as surely as two and two are four, *militarism cannot be crushed by militarism.*

The attemps to do so are fruitless, insane.

But this does not mean that militarism will never be eradicated. Merely that it will come about in some other way.

Let us look at the few connected links of progress forged by humanity.

They have been made by thinkers.

Religious fanaticism was a frightful scourge for humanity — as frightful as rabid patriotism in our day.

For religious reasons Christians and Mohammedans murdered each other throughout the centuries. The fruitless Crusades were wars of religion. The Moors and the Jews were driven from Spain for religious reasons. Jews and heretics were for centuries dragged to the stake in religion's name. For religion the immense bonfires burned witches in Europe and America. Even in Shakespeare's day the tortures perpetrated in the name of religion constituted a public as well as a royal spectacle; they were one of the court diversions. Just as Mary Stuart was a cheerful spectator to religious and political mass murders, so her son, King James, was pleased to be present at the torture of a Dr. Fian. Accused of having conjured up a storm at sea, the knuckles of his bones were broken and his nails were pulled out and needles stuck through his bleeding fingertips.

In January, 1695, that paragon of virtue, August the Strong of Saxony, had Neitschütz's widow tortured on the rack as guilty of witchcraft whereby her daughter Sibylle, who died at the age of nineteen, inspired the passionate love of the deceased Elector John George.

The Hussite wars and the Thirty Years' War, which ravaged Germany and Bohemia, were wars of religion.

Incredible though it may be, we no longer crush the

knuckles of magicians nor do we burn heretics, Jews, or witches. We do not declare war for the sake of religion. It is inconceivable to-day that Phillip II should ravage Flanders because the inhabitants are Protestants. This does not necessarily imply that Flanders of to-day is any better off.

For as we all know, religious fanaticism has given way to national madness. But if we have succeeded in knocking the teeth out of the religious-mad hounds, we may conceive a hope of eventually knocking the teeth out of national hatred. After all, religion is founded on older and more respectable traditions. Some day nationalistic insanity may find its Voltaire.

Among certain races and in certain countries we have seen deep-rooted conventions of honour overcome. Few institutions were as soundly intrenched as the duel. It is founded on some of the finest instincts in humanity, on hatred to injustice, the desire for redress, on honour, aristocratic tradition and personal pride. In the eighteenth century it still flourished among Anglo-Saxons, as well as among Latins, Germans, and Slavs. It is still ineradicable in Germany and France. But in Great Britain and the United States it is dead, as in the Scandinavian countries.

If the duel could die a natural death one may dream of a day when war will die. But just as the duel could not be eradicated by decapitating duellists, as attempted by Richelieu, so militarism cannot be uprooted by con-

scription, long military service and a profusion of munitions.

Think of all the prejudices that had to be destroyed before the duel disappeared! Such scorn and derision as met the man who refused to challenge if insulted! What a school for courage, honour and personal dignity the duel was for thousands of years! And yet, quietly, unobtrusively, without cries or regrets, it has been eliminated and forgotten by the most civilised nations of humanity.

According to its partisans, its disappearance ought to have caused a weakening of the moral fibre, given birth to cowardice and a plebeian mode of thought. Yet no man in his senses considers the American or the Englishman less of a man than the Frenchman or the German.

There is no more reason to praise war than there is to praise the duel.

We often read that were it not for the qualities developed by war humanity would lose stamina, decay. But those of us who are not awed by words are not convinced.

In a few small and slightly civilised communities the disappearance of the duel may, perhaps, favour impudences of the press. Newspapers may be more circumspect when an offence calls forth a challenge. But in larger communities, in England or America, men have not lost their honour since the duel disappeared, nor

has life, on the whole, become less rich. Nor has luxury increased nor idealism diminished.

The disappearance of war would not be more fatal to the highest values in life than the elimniation of the duel.

We are all acquainted with the old rigmarole that absence of war would not advance the world but would dull mankind and allow it to relapse into a life of ease. We know Moltke's words, logical in the mouth of a general, that permanent peace is a dream and not even a beautiful one. We have all heard that war alone develops a nation's self-sacrifice and enthusiasm.

No one can deny that war gives birth to something besides horrors and atrocities without number. It reveals heroism, abnegation. But this is no reason for worshipping it.

A fire gives courageous firemen an opportunity to show their bravery, their agility, and endurance; but no one praises fires, least of all a blaze that destroys a city.

Appalling epidemics give conscientious doctors and brave nurses an opportunity to display heroism, forethought, intelligence, and quick-wittedness, and many other virtues; but no one sings hymns to cholera or typhus.

Poverty and misery often occasion charity and human-kindness. Yet no thinking person feels that these qualities justify starvation.

Europe at the present moment is in the hands of moderately endowed political dilettantes. He who admires statesmanship has no cause for admiration. All progress made by Eurpoe is being turned into mass murder, for the ultimate profit of the Powers outside of Europe which in the future will fight for supremacy: Japan and the United States. Europe is being bled to death by its own towering and almost imposing insanity.

In the face of this apparent almightiness of brutality, some of the younger generation seem to feel that absolute brutality is real civilisation. I wish they would abandon this view. A single, genial, active personality is worth more to the world than all masterly organised brutality.

## PROTECTORS OF SMALL NATIONS

(October, 1915)

The inhabitants of all belligerent countries are convinced that in this world war their country is in the right and the enemy is in the wrong. When the writer from a neutral country does not use the qualifications taken from an ethical or jurisprudential vocabulary, but remarks that the whole immense war is beyond right and wrong, the leading men in belligerent countries call out, so as to show up his lack of judgment and his superculture:

"Answer! Which side is in the right, which side in the wrong?"

Right! As if it had anything to do with the boundless misery which the rivalry of nations and the folly of political dillettantes and the shortsightedness and servility of a yellow press have brought over the world!

The French and English have naturally taken as the basis for their propaganda two facts which revolted all humanity: Austria-Hungary's attack on Serbia — which, after the receipt of the ultimatum, had done everything within its power to agree to the Austrian de-

mands in order to prevent war, and Germany's violation of Belgian neutrality — an act which even the German Chancellor admitted was wrong, and to which the Germans added atrocities without number.

But when this double attack is presented as uncalled for, and as if it did not have a long premeditated history, and the generalisation is made that neither France nor England wanted war — that they are merely fighting to protect small nations and to guard the sanctity of signed treaties,— then he who knows anything about the history of Europe in modern times and who did not abdicate all power of thought at the outbreak of the war, must pause and wonder.

And the more so because Germany, in spite of her inhuman treatment of the Polish, Danish, and French elements within the empire, also claims to be fighting for the rights and the independence of small nations. She is fighting Russia, who with still less regard for solemnly made pledges than Germany has let the Finnish people feel her wrath, and who in the kingdom of Poland has kept the Poles and even more the Jews in an outrageous state of oppression. Germany claims to be fighting both Russia and England, who united to abolish Persia's independence and her constitution. The division of Persia, by the way, is one of the most instructive events of our day and illustrates the attitude of great nations in regard to the weaker states.

Indeed, it may be claimed without exaggeration that

when two great nations form a real close and whole-hearted association, whether called alliance, agreement, or *entente,* the object is to deprive a small state of its independence. The former friendship between Russia and Germany grew out of the splitting of Poland. The more recent alliance between Austria and Germany was sealed at the expense of Denmark. The hearty understanding between France and England was reached over Morocco. This war is rich in examples which it is not yet timely to discuss. On the whole, the attitude of the great nations in regard to the weaker states is dictated by their own interests.

Germany's solicitude for small states, made with all seriousness now, in reference to Poland, for instance, strikes the impartial listener as a tragic jest. But Great Britain's great solicitude for the smaller nations is also of comparatively recent date. It is not necessary to refer to England's treatment of Ireland for seven centuries. Suffice to recall that in the beginning of the nineteenth century England, for political reasons which had very little to do with *right,* attacked Denmark, which was then absolutely neutral, bombarded Copenhagen, and while the Danish army lay in Holstein to guard its neutrality, sank and destroyed Denmark's fleet and gave Norway to Bernadotte as a reward because he deserted Napoleon.

In the last twelve years alone, five small states have lost their independence. For perfectly valid reasons

neither France nor England made the slightest protest.

The republics of Transvaal and Orange lost their independence when England appropriated their territory which, since that time, she has governed admirably.

Persia lost her independence by what even in England has been called "a bargain of thieves" between Russia and England. Morocco was divided into two unequal parts by Spain and France, as a compensation for giving England free hands in Egypt and for allowing her the privilege of breaking her promise to leave the country.

Conditions in Korea are warnings of the fate which threatens Belgium. Korea's neutrality was guaranteed by Japan, Russia, England, and France, and by the signatures of all these Powers on treaties. The Queen of Korea was murdered by the Japanese, as Austria-Hungary's throne successor by the Serbians. Shortly thereafter the Japanese pounced on Korea and obliged the Koreans to side with them and declare war on Russia. Both Russia and Korea objected, and asked England and France to intervene. But neither Power felt any inclination to interfere. Neither felt affected because a treaty of neutrality and independence was broken. Korea's independence was then on its deathbed, and is now no more.

Now Europe is lying on her sickbed, or possibly even on her deathbed. One is usually silent in a death

chamber. At any rate one approaches Europe's sick-bed as hesitatingly and carefully as one would approach the sickroom of a human being.

## I

An interesting explanation of France's participation in the war was given me a short time ago in a letter signed "Georges Dauville" from Senegal, West Africa. I am quoting it because it reflects an educated Frenchman's truthful view of his country's attitude during the last generation, although I am not entirely in accord with it. He writes:

"Dear Dr. Brandes:

"Very far from the battle-field, in Soudan, where the mobilisation overtook me and where it has kept me ever since, I learn by the *Mercure de France* of May, 1915, of your polemic with Clemençeau and of most foreigners' conception of the French people's attitude in the war.

"At the distance from which I write it is hard to intrude. Will you allow me briefly to explain the truth about the politics and the attitude in France of to-day and yesterday? It is strange that no foreigner has been able to penetrate French spirit sufficiently to grasp certain fundamental truths. Most assuredly no French paper could print what I am going to say, just as no well known French author could sign his name to

it. This enforced silence is doubtless the cause of the misunderstanding between us and the outside world.

"The simple truth is:

"In the first place: There is a profound difference between French and German culture; it seems to have its root in the very essence of the two nations. Amalgamation, reunion, or relationship between them is impossible. There reigns an absolute and everlasting mutual nonunderstanding. Yet war would never have been declared because the two peoples did not understand each other and never could.

"Secondly: Economically speaking the Germans flooded France as they did all countries of the world. (I am not speaking of espionage, as that is a military institution — I am dealing only with the economic problem.) But in spite of the German influx in French life there was no visible loss of French capital nor any increase in poverty, which is very rare in France, and almost always caused by laziness or drink. A few attempts were made to rid France of Germany's economic domination, but France would never have gone to war to protect her trade or industry.

"In other words: Neither racial differences nor economic competition led us to look upon the Germans as enemies no matter how little we understood them.

"Further: Since 1871 there has never been any real political rivalry between France and Germany. In spite of appearances which would seem to prove the

contrary, there was no rivalry in Morocco, Turkey, in Antwerp, the Mediterranean, nor the Baltic. Nowhere in the world. This Germany admitted when she accused us of being England's cat's paw and dupes.

"The Germans were right, in one sense, except that we knew what we were doing and even helped create the illusion.

"But, you will say, wasn't Germany the *hereditary enemy?* Not at all. The first generation of Frenchmen who looked upon Germany as the enemy are still alive. They belong to the generation that fought in the War of 1871. The enemy which we, without interruption and for a thousand years have fought — not long ago here in Soudan — is England. You cannot imagine how often we hear: 'At the time of the Fashoda incidents who would ever have thought England and France would fight side by side on French territory!' And many a foreigner will remember the enthusiasm with which Commandant Marchand was received in Marseilles, Lyons, Paris.

"Most assuredly it is long since the French hated the English. The Englishman is not our enemy by culture or race. Yet from an historical and political standpoint he is the typical enemy. He has at all times been a rival in our desire for national expansion, and we know very well that he would have clashed with us as recently as in 1905 if a settlement had not been reached. As for Russia, we do not know her. The

masses look upon the Russian as the good-natured giant we read about in the fairy tales. He is the giant who comes to help us. The educated public looks upon Russia in two different ways. First as an ally with inexhaustible troops to which we, with our stationary birth rate, have loaned billions to balance Germany's steadily increasing population in the event of a war. That is why Russia, from the day war broke out, was called by journalists the 'steam roller.' We also look upon the Russians as oppressed by the upper classes and by the Tzar's bureaucracy. But these conditions do not affect our political alliance. Most Frenchmen make a point of never discussing them. Only the most rabid Socialists make an exception to this seemly attitude. All in all the Franco-Russian alliance, entailing the loan of billions, was a political necessity created by a Germany strutting with bayonets.

"To conclude: What cannot be effaced between France and Germany, is Alsace-Lorraine, and this is not a political question but an *anatomical* one.

"Before the days of the Revolution political treaties were made and broken just as one changed clothes: every ten or twenty years the landmarks were moved. The border populations changed rulers without complaint, were satisfied with their fate, looked upon every judgment as fate. Then the nineteenth century realised that the Revolution had penetrated the world with a new principle — *nationalism.* The feeling took root,

grew, became an irresistible power. Germany's unity is the result of it. Yet at the very moment when Germany cemented her national unity and when every country — even Alsace-Lorraine — swelled with national feeling, Bismarck pounced upon us and wrenched this land away from us. The year 1870 no longer means the moving of a boundary stone but the amputation of a limb.

"In the course of time one may forgive the opponent who knocks out a couple of teeth; but he whose hand has been cut off is obliged to suffer the loss of it all his life. Let us suppose, for instance, that this amputated hand retained its life and feeling and could show its silent suffering, and suppose the enemy was so cruel as to wring its fingers off before the very eyes of the owner, or to pull its nails out! Suppose that he also cried: 'Just try to take it back! We're seventy millions and you're only forty!'

"Alsace-Lorraine is to France as an amputated hand, and the war is made only because of it. For thirty years our alliances, our agreements, our finances, our repeated humiliations — everything has been subordinated to this one consideration. We felt it our duty to be patient, to suffer in silence, to lie low until the Russian giant should grow up and be able to say to Germany: 'Well, if you're seventy millions, I am one hundred and fifty — now we'll see some fun!'

"I can prove that this is the French people's true feeling toward the war.

"If among German men of culture — which may be defined as 'stupid intelligence'—there had been a king, a statesman, a real diplomat, even a real successor to Bismarck, who, after we made the alliance with Russia, had said to us: 'I will give you back Alsace-Lorraine — break the alliance!'— we would have broken it on the spot and remained neutral under any German-Russian or German-English clash.

"In exchange for Alsace-Lorraine, Germany could, within the last thirty years, have had all our colonies, with the exception of Algiers, and money to boot.

"At the time of the Fashoda incidents and shortly thereafter, Germany could have had us as allies and could have crushed England.

"I even venture to say that as late as July, 1914, the offer of Alsace-Lorraine would have led us to abandon Russia and all our billions. Yea, under those conditions Germany could have taken the mouth of the Rhine and Antwerp without impressing us more than she did the United States.

"But 'stupid intelligence' decided otherwise.

"When the Kaiser at given intervals sent out his celebrated dry-powder ultimatum: 'I am seventy millions — you are only forty,' Europe was amused, grinned at our stupidity, called us imbeciles and bluffers who never could forget about an amputated hand. Yet

what could we do but remain silent, be on our guard, while cementing our alliance with Russia? If the world does not see that during half a year we have forged a war machine as great as that which it has taken Germany thirty years to perfect, does not see this *révanche* which our science and our nerves have taken and developed while the country is partially in the hands of the enemy — then Germany knows how to manufacture very heavy blinds!

"Very sincerely yours."

## II

To this very interesting French *exposé* I should like to add a few remarks.

It is accepted as an axiom among the men of "Young France" that a reciprocal fertilisation of French and German mentality is impossible. This fundamental principle which M. Dauville takes as his starting point is a strange delusion. The intellectual life of Alsace flatly contradicts it. Alsatian authors have amalgamated French and German qualities in French language. The same is even true of men of science. One could, for instance, mention the Biblical student Reuss, professor of theology at the University of Strassburg. Before 1870 he wrote in German, after the war in French only; but German learning and French form combined to create the unity of his talent. In our day French-Swiss authors like Cherbuliez and Rod

were influenced by Germany. Going back into history one might mention the German descendants of the expulsed Huguenots. In Berlin, especially, their rationalism has a French tinge. Many of these families with French names like Fontane or Dubois-Reymond number among their ancestors authors and scientists of distinctly Prussian patriotism but whose personality show traces of French influence. An emigrant like Adalbert von Chamisso, of pure French blood, wanted to be German and wrote only in German. He really blended both nationalities, and French influence may be detected in other works besides his masterly translation of French poetry into German.

As a whole, French intellectual life of the last century is not indebted to Germany. This is due to the immense cultural lead of France. As early as the twelfth century the stream of cultural influence ran from France to Germany, but never back to its source. Authors of the German epics, Heinrich von Veldeke, Hartmann von der Aue, Gottfried von Strassburg, were merely translators and adapters of the French. Chrestien de Troyes entirely dominates Hartmann von der Aue. Even Wolfram von Eschenbach formed his taste by the study of Chrestien.

It is not until the nineteenth century that German influence is felt in France, as when Charles Nodier is affected by Goethe and Amadeus Hoffman, Alexandre Dumas by Schiller. Most distinctly may German in-

fluence be traced by Quinet, whose feeling is quite German, and in Taine, who gathered knowledge from Hegel as from Goethe, enjoyed Heine and lived with Beethoven, and finally in Renan, who was influenced by Herder and entirely saturated by German science which he has transposed into the most perfect French form. In our days, Romain Rolland, influenced by Germany, has shown the deepest understanding of German feeling and character.

In the course of a whole people's intellectual history this tardy and scattered influence does not, of course, amount to very much, even if in certain respects, as in music, it has been very evident.

But if one looks at German cultural history, throughout the centuries, one finds proof of the effective amalgamation of French and German culture. Just as the legends of Flore and Blancheflore, Tristan and Isolde, came from France, so, later on, Rabelais was imitated by Fischart, Gottsched represented French classicism, and Frederick the Great, Voltaire. For a time Voltaire and Rousseau entirely ruled German thought and feeling. Much more recently Victor Hugo influenced Freiligrath, while Zola and Maupassant have had innumerable German disciples.

The differences, then, between the French and German spirit are not greater than that they may be overcome. The attempt to account for them by the racial opposition — Latin-German — is almost amusing, since

both French and Germans are issued from a mixture of races, and the Gauls were Celts, not Latins. In reality, there is more German blood in the French than in the Germans of to-day.

The next point, that in France no one thought of war for economic reasons, is doubtlessly true. French trade had long ceased to rival Germany's, and its inferiority could not have been remedied by a war. Such desperate measures were unnecessary, anyway, as French capital increases by thrift and investment as German capital through business initiative.

Regarding Germany as the hereditary enemy, M. Dauville's contribution contains nothing new or different. More than once I have heard, even before Fashoda, in 1896, that England, not Germany, is the hereditary enemy of France. These were the very words of the celebrated and talented author, Paul Hervieu, who at that time had just left the diplomatic service.

The ill-feeling toward England was clearly shown in France in 1898 when France was threatened and obliged to give up Fashoda: it was manifest throughout the entire Boer War, when collections for the benefit of the fighting Boers met with great response. Kruger was hailed with enthusiasm, while Edward VII was grossly caricatured in French journals. Animosity was even more clearly shown at the World's Fair in 1900 when Scotch workingmen, whom their Govern-

ment had sent in groups to see and to study the machines and the wares, were so grossly insulted that they had to leave France.

M. Dauville is right, of course, when he explains why France had to buy the Russian alliance at any price. And he is almost tragically right when he states the ignorance of the French masses as to the real government in Russia, whose authority it is now a duty to admire. He uses an especially lenient term in "only the violent Socialists make an exception to this seemly attitude." This attitude which has dominated for more than a score of years caused bitter sorrow and disappointment among the Poles who for a hundred years had looked to France as to the nation that would protect theim against Russian as well as against Prussian tyranny. It was French support which maintained Russian despotism in spite of desperate attempts at revolution made by a desperate people.

Great cordiality always existed between Prussian and Russian autocracy; they co-operated if a Russian or a Pole attempted to break away from their tyranny. But then French gold and French enthusiasm were brought to strengthen Russian bureaucracy and to weave an aureole of liberty around it. There was world historical irony in Emperor Alexander III listening with bared head, to the "Marseillaise," played by a Russian military band.

Even more bitterly ironical it was that French de-

mocracy should become the greatest obstacle toward creating a liberal government in Russia.

## III

Both English and French are equally to blame.

The fundamental cause of the present war is the opposition between Russia and the Central Powers, the hatred between Slavs and Germans, Russia's struggle with Austria for the domination of the Balkans. France was attacked by Germany simply because she was an ally of Russia. Germany would have preferred to fight it out with Russia without war with France. The agreement which Great Britain made openly with Russia but which was turned into a military alliance, without the *knowledge of Parliament,* was an incalculable obstacle to Russian liberty.

Russia depended and still depends on the capital of the western states. She needs loans. She requires credit. But if banks are to be accommodating, the small investor must have confidence in the nation that wants to borrow. Ever since King Edward visited the Tzar in Reval and the Tzar King Edward on the Isle of Wight, the English papers chimed in the chorus to paint Russia as a benevolent state in steady progress toward constitutional freedom. Then, only did the English investor take his cheque book out. As in France, the press, politicians, and the upper classes conspired to

praise the Russian Government and to whitewash its character.

Russia did not seek England as a liberal power, no more than France because she was a republic. Russia had borrowed such immense sums from France, that, after the unfortunate war with Japan, French financiers grew cautious and demanded English backing. And Russia, therefore, turned to England.

Negotiations were begun in 1905 under Lord Lansdowne. But his successor, Sir Edward Grey, was the man who really carried them out, and the alliance was first drafted in the spring of 1906.

It will be remembered that the Russian people obtained a constitution from the Tzar in October, 1905. The elections to the first Duma took place amid great excitement, although reaction raged worse than ever in the provinces. Yet a great hope surged through the Russian people. The new Duma showed an immense radical majority and the Constitutional Democrats (called Cadets) ruled the house. They had to fight a reactionary ministry and a court which regretted having been forced into concessions.

The Duma could have braved despotism if it had been able to meet a bankrupt, detested Government, by the words: "Your safe is empty, your credit gone. We, the leaders of New Russia, have the people and Europe back of us.

"Recognise our authority to grant appropriations,

introduce ministerial responsibility, and we will vote your taxes and agree to loans, as you may wish. But if you refuse us our rights, we shall see that neither Paris nor London finances your system of oppression."

The Duma could not take this stand. In March, 1906, the immense loan had been floated in London and Paris, and when the Duma met in May the Government's cash box was full.

How the Liberals of Russia had begged the liberal states in Europe not to kill Russian liberty by authorising these loans!

After less than three months' life the first Duma was dissolved and the rest of the year Stolypine ruled without Parliament while court-martials imposed death sentences throughout the whole country. The second Duma met in 1907 and proved to be even more radical than the first.

Stolypine then accused the Social-Democrats, the most influential party in the Duma, of conspiring against the Government to foment a military revolution.

A jury selected from all parties unanimously proclaimed the Socialists not guilty, and announced this fact to the third Duma. By a *coup d' état,* thirty-five were then secretly tried by special court, seventeen were condemned to four and five years' hard labour, ten were exiled for life to Siberia. Two of them died in prison, one lost his mind, a fourth, the leader of the party, died from consumption. They were all treated

like prisoners of common law, put in chains and flogged. The dissolution of the second Duma practically killed Russian liberty. Kropotkin shows in *Russian Terrorism,* 1909, that the number of political prisoners during the ensuing period of nominal liberty rose from an average of 85,000 in 1905, to 181,000 in 1909. He shows the frightful diseases that raged within the prisons and the frequency with which torture was resorted to. In 1909 court-martials hung on an average three political convicts a day. The number of political exiles to Siberia and north Russia at that time was, according to official figures, seventy-four a day.

If there had been no financial co-operation between France, England, and the Russian Government, such coditions could not have existed.

Tragic words are spoken to cast dust in the eyes of the public. Among these, the phrase, "The Alliance with France and England is transforming Russia into a liberal power fighting for liberty," is one of the most tragic. At the beginning of the war the celebrated Russian revolutionary, Burtzef, convinced that Russia was growing liberal, placed himself at the Government's disposal. To show he was willing to back up his statements by his actions, he went to Russia. No sooner had he crossed the border than he was arrested and exiled to Siberia for life. During the war reaction has set in much more violently than before. Although the members of the Duma are inviolable by law, five Social-

Democrats were imprisoned on the charge of treason. One of these, Adamovitsj, was sentenced to hard labour for life because he organised a syndicate among sailors.

## IV

The next and most decisive point in M. Dauville's explanation is the Alsace-Lorraine question. He dwells on the feeling of France for these provinces, on the great sorrow and humiliation felt by France at losing them, her suffering at witnessing their torture and her irresistible longing to get them back. She was willing to pay any price for their restitution — colonies or costly alliances. To win these provinces back was France's only object in entering the war. As a term of comparison he uses an amputated hand.

The comparison does not seem very apt, since it would be impossible after a time — or even immediately following the amputation — to make a hand grow on the wrist from which it had been cut, but the term of comparison is, on the whole, of slight importance. But what is more incomprehensible is that an educated Frenchman, one who thinks in political terms, should be so ignorant of Danish history as to try to explain how a country suffers when its provinces are torn away. He evidently never thought of Denmark's present position in North Schleswig. Neither does he know, apparently, how cruelly a nation suffers when provinces which historically and linguistically belong to it are

wrested away. While Alsace grew French under Louis XIV, Schleswig has been Danish from the Saga days. We all know that the French are more familiar with the history of their own country than that of other countries, but such ignorance is surprising.

M. Dauville is in the wrong regarding an incidental remark no the restitution of Alsace-Lorraine. That is where he says, "Bismarck pounced upon us." Bismarck was not responsible for the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine, just as he was not to blame for Denmark's loss of North Schleswig. As his now forgotten letter to Blixen-Finecke proves, his intention was to settle the questions of the Duchies (Schleswig) without war, so that Denmark should not lose any of her Danish-speaking population, if Blixen-Finecke became minister of foreign affairs. Even at the London Conference Denmark could have had North Schleswig, if in the hope of obtaining better terms she had not refused to compromise. As for Alsace-Lorraine, after the Franco-Prussian War, Bismarck opposed the imperialistic tendencies of Moltke and the war party as he did after Austria's defeat.

At the Prague Conference he succeeded in enforcing his will so that no part of Austria or of Bavaria became Prussian. After the Franco-Prussian War he asserted that the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine would lead to another war within fifty years or so. But he was unable to win the Kaiser over to his side for Moltke and

the military leaders argued vociferously that the pen must not be allowed to give the enemy what the sword had won.

The loss of Alsace-Lorraine was not merely felt with sorrow and grief, but it seemed symbolic of France reduced to a second rank power. M. Dauville, however, does not refer to the extensive colonies which France has acquired since 1870 and which have somewhat made up for this loss, so that the younger generation feels the deep wound of Alsace more as a scar than anything else.

An enquiry conducted by the *Mercure de France* in 1898 is interesting. It proved that only those who were of age in 1870 and who took part in the war feel the loss of the provinces as an unhealable wound.

The distinguished French thinker, Clemence Royer, the translator of Darwin, wrote at the time:

"Alsace and Lorraine were taken away from us, as we took them, by force. We may take them back again. They will then again be taken away from us. What do the provinces gain by this, except to be ravaged again and again by war! And can we really claim that they should belong to us because of race or tradition? Since the days of the Romans, Alsace has been German. It was not even inhabited by the Franks. Under the Merovingien kings it was part of Allemania or Schwabia whose language it has kept to this day."

G. Montergueil: "The day after defeat revenge is a beautiful and noble thought — it rouses to energy.

After a quarter of a century, an offensive attitude is a pose, ridiculous rather than great. A few madmen may conceive of making war to win back Alsace-Lorraine, and many hypocrites may demand it. But the people do not want it; they would have expressed their opinion openly on their subject, if they had dared. Yet they hint at that which they do not say openly."

The young authors of the day advanced startling opinions. The Brothers Paul and Victor Margueritte, whose father had been mortally wounded at Sedan, (Paul Margueritte recently published a passionate war volume: *Contre les Barbares*) said: "They who have lived through the feverish days of the war will always remember them; but others will forget them. One may foresee the day when the names Sedan and Metz will not stir us any more or differently than Waterloo, or the Allies' march into Paris in 1814."

Ferdinand Herold: "A revolution in Alsace against Germany, or something equally unreasonable, would be needed to cause a Franco-German War. And even then how could the French Government logically interfere, since it has recognised Abdul Hamid in Armenia and the Spanish Regent in Cuba?"

Francis Jammes (at that time a highly esteemed lyrical poet): "Not a single French peasant dreams of reconquering Alsace. The bourgeois does not want to fight. Artists would only be disturbed by war. The only one who would welcome war is the exhausted, con-

sumptive, and alcoholic labourer who ambles along in the chilly dawn to the factory where the demands of capitalists, the foreman's abuse, and fall from scaffoldings await him."

ANDRE LEBEY: "We were beaten, after we ourselves had declared war, and were obliged to submit to the demands of the victors. One replies immediately to a thrashing. The following day is too late. We always think of Alsace; we often weep about it; at dessert we solemnly drink to its honour; at fêtes we enjoy adorning our lyrical speeches with black crêpe bands. But that is all."

REMY DE GOURMONT (one of the founders of the *Mercure de France,* a highly esteemed poet and writer): "A reconciliation is inevitable. The German is no longer the enemy. The stupidity of calling Germany the hereditary enemy is only seen in papers playing for public favour. But public favour does not meet them half way."

CAMILLE MAUCLAIR (highly appreciated author and journalist): *"Révanche* is campaign material for elections, only.—

"It lost out when Boulangism failed because of its incapable leaders and of its general's indecision. As far as we writers are concerned, we have been repulsed by the stupid literature to which nationalism has given birth."

HENRI DE REGNIER (now the recognised leader of the

younger school of poets, member of the *Académie*): "I believe the question of Alsace-Lorranie is a matter of national pride. Germany's annexation of the two provinces seems a symbol of our momentary inferiority. That is why it galls us. If our national pride could be redeemed in other ways, the wound would heal even if we did not win the lost provinces back."

Even seventeen years ago these sentiments did not surprise any one who had followed the evolution of French mentality. In *Le Journal* (22 July, 1898) the popular and highly esteemed author, François Coppee, told of the havoc caused by a series of storms in Alsace. He appealed eloquently to the French people's fellow-feeling and opened up a subscription. Not a single contribution was made. The *Mercure de France* tried to find out why Coppee's patriotic appeal had been such a dismal failure. At that time (the Fashoda year) the hatred for England was so intense in France that Germany was almost forgotten, and I made practically the same remark as M. Dauville now, namely, that "not Germany, but England, is the hereditary enemy of France." Anglo-French rivalry in France and Asia and the conditions in Egypt and at the Niger inflamed France's resentment for England. At that time, the working classes, whether they were socialistic or anarchistic, would hear nothing of national hatred for Germany but looked upon the German working people as brothers. I wrote: "Enthusiasm for Germany is

often found among French intellectuals. Richard Wagner, who is discussed more passionately in France than in any other country, has done much to spread German influence. Rather remarkable is the tendency among certain of the younger generation, to learn and speak German."

In writing the last sentence I thought of Leon Daudet (now the most rabid chauvinist in France), who, a few years before, in his father's house, always seized every occasion to speak German. He often spoke German to me and I replied in French. Now he accuses me of not being sufficiently French.

During the Dreyfus affair and the ensuing acute internal struggle when bellicose "nationalism" was apparently ousted, *révanche* lost favour and most Frenchmen looked upon the nationalistic spokesman, Paul Déroulède, as a sort of semi-comical figure. Not until after his death did he become a national hero.

Only in recent years did intellectual circles gain confidence in the army. And with confidence came the idea of reconquering the lost provinces. It soon began to shine as a duty.

## V

That exalted national feeling is not exclusively on the German side is shown by the May number of the *Mercure de France*. In it M. Leon Bloy has an article on "Jeanne d'Arc and Germany." Public opinion all

over the world has been incensed at Germany's assumption that German culture and civilisation are higher than other civilisations. But has any German writer gone further than M. Bloy in the following words about France?

He says, for instance:

"After Israel who were called God's people by special favour, God has loved no nation on earth as much as France. Explain it whoever can. To call this nation the most noble of all nations — which it undoubtedly is — serves no purpose, since such divine prerogatives are the reward of the chosen one. God's predilection can only be explained by His good pleasure which cannot be understood but which must be worshipped. France is so far ahead of all other peoples that, no matter who they be, they should feel honoured at being allowed to eat the crumbs destined for her dogs.

"A whole, homogeneous France whose geography has remained unchanged for three hundred years is necessary to God because otherwise He would not exist and He would not be completely God. No matter what crimes or sins of faithlessness France may have committed, God will never allow her to be crushed as He needs her for His own glory, and the foul Lutherans who mutiliated her half a century ago will be punished with inconceivable severity."

Few German professors in their insane pride have gone to such extreme as to say that the nations of Eu-

rope should be grateful and feel honoured at sharing their bread with Germany's dogs.

Nations in our days may have much to pride themselves on and little to boast of. Yet each one is convinced it is the most wonderful people in Europe and if God is God, He must grant that particular nation victory. If He does not do so immediately, this is because He must first chastise, like the great and kind Father He is. Seen with French glasses, He hates German barbarism, seen by German eyes He favours German culture and guards especially the house of Hohenzollern. Both France and Germany are certain that they are His chosen peoples, the incarnations of His being on earth. If He were to fail them He would go against His own nature, arouse doubts as to His almightiness or even as to His existence. But as even the Almighty cannot favour both sides at the same time, He must, at the present moment, hear from both sides cries which pass from bitter complaints to impudent attacks.

An ordinary mortal should, therefore, not feel hurt when he, a mere human, is attacked or misunderstood by the belligerents. Yet it is his right to explain his attitude or to show how unjust are their attacks, or rather how unfounded. After M. Clemençeau in a most injurious way had cut short his polemics with me (which he himself began) the paper *Le Temps* reprinted his conclusion and added in an irritated article

that my "personality lacked logical sequence." I have not been able to find a copy of this article; but the *Mercure de France* which inspired M. Dauville to write me quotes the *Temps* as "complaining that I have 'neither love of truth nor the courage to express it.'" To this quotation the *Mercure* adds the following words: "If newspaper attacks sufficed to make him an enemy of France, this was the best possible way of doing it."

My love for France is far too deep to be affected by this stupid clamour; yet it is rather hard and quite unfair that the reward of a lifelong enthusiasm for a country as proved in actions and evidenced in an unusual understanding of that country, should be to find oneself held up to the masses of that people (who have no means of ascertaining the truth) as an object of hatred and scorn. And this by personal, trusted friends because of sincere convictions, misinterpreted as to mean the opposite of what they really do.

Although *Mercure de France's* good feeling for me is conditional and it quite incorrectly remarks that I have written more about Germany than about France and England, I am grateful for its intention and its attempt to understand. Still more grateful am I to M. Edouard Herriot, the mayor of Lyons, because he remarked that in this critical period I have neither been untrue to myself nor to my ideals.

When the representatives of the European press some time ago visited Denmark, they grasped each others'

hands and danced in a circle around M. Alberti,[1] at Skotsborg, while the assembled members of the "world's press" joined in the chorus of "He is a jolly good fellow." This was symbolic. Then, as always, the world's press displayed the psychological insight which, in praise as well as in blame, it reveals when dealing with Northern personalities and conditions.

[1] M. Alberti, a former Danish minister of finances, was accused and convicted of a multimillion defalcation.

## AN APPEAL

(May, 1916)

Each of the Great Powers declares the war it is waging is a war of defence. They have all been attacked; they are all fighting for their existence. For all of them murder and lies are necessary means of defence. But since none of the Powers, by their own showing, wanted war, let them make peace!

After twenty-two months' war, however, peace seems farther off than ever. The fighting nations each and all must first win the victory of civilisation over barbarism — and call civilisation their conception of higher culture, right, justice, or democracy as opposed to militarism.

Civilisation! The first fruit of this civilisation has been to spread over the earth the truth-killing Russian censorship. The second is that we have come back to the days of human sacrifice. With this difference, however, that in the barbarous days of ancient history four or five prisoners of war were offered each year to please a much feared divinity, whereas now four or five millions are sacrificed to the fetiches of the day.

Lamennais once wrote: "Satan inspired the oppressors of mankind with a fiendish thought. He said

to them: In each family take the strongest and bravest men and give them arms! Then I shall give them two idols called honour and loyalty, and one law, which they shall call obedience to duty. They shall worship these idols and blindly obey this law."

When we consider the present war to crush militarism we find that it has brought military compulsion to the only country which had hitherto remained free from it, and while militarism is being fought on the battle-field, civilian rule is being replaced everywhere by the military, or flouted by it.

We follow this fight for freedom during which every shipload, every cargo is inspected or destroyed by the defenders of liberty as well as by the worshippers of might; every letter is opened, even personal letters between neutrals.

We follow the struggle for a higher civilisation, during which Germany has crushed Belgium, Austria-Hungary, Servia; England, Greece; Russia, East Prussia and Poland: this fight for right in which right is everywhere flouted and the interests of the governments alone considered — this fight for the independence of small states in which that independence is on both sides infringed, disregarded, abolished.

In belligerent countries the armies first of all want victory, but secondly they long for peace. The civilian population everywhere sighs for peace. But the governments, clinging desperately to their seats, dig their

spurs into the flanks of the exhausted steed, and race madly on.

The desire for peace is not allowed to find outlet.

In neutral countries public opinion does not consider it seemly to discuss peace. Public opinion is usually on the level of the shop girl who "sympathises" with one side or the other and thereby forgets to add her bit to the scale of justice.

Among neutrals, one power has more influence than all the others combined. Do the United States of America mean only to profit by the war instead of using their influence to further peace? Is there, in short, no one who believes in peace, in common sense, and in sound judgment?

The cry for peace that will soon rise from belligerent countries is called cowardly. But if mankind remains silent, the stones will cry. The ruins everywhere call for peace, not revenge. And where stones are silent, fields and meadows cry, watered with blood, fertilised with the dead.

The whole world is in the throes of malicious joy. The only satisfaction is to hurt others, in self-defence. Ships are torpedoed "successfully." Bombardments have "excellent results." One man brings down his twentieth aëroplane. And there is rejoicing. If any one asks, "How can you rejoice?" the answer is the phrase hypocritically stamped as jesuitical, as devilish, "The end justifies the means."

Cruelty has become a duty; compassion is treachery.

The Germans suffer hunger and privations. The Allies rejoice. Belgium and Serbia are crushed. Germans and Austrians rejoice. The Poles are starving, the Jews are inexpressibly wretched. The belligerents are unable to alleviate the misery.

All of the belligerents are proud of the "daring courage and the heroic resistance" of their men. Both sides claim that among their opponents the basest instincts have broken loose, and both sides are unfortunately right.

The Central Powers say they want peace. But they do not seem willing to make any real compromise to obtain it. Their object is to cripple their enemies so that "peace may be lasting."

The Allies will not hear of peace until the "decisive victory" has been won, i.e., before they have obtained what they for nearly two years have been fighting for fruitlessly, and to which they seem no nearer. They too want to crush their enemies before they will discuss peace.

Whatever happens, no matter how great the battles won, how valuable the ships sunk, how costly the aircraft destroyed, how many belligerents are massacred, one thing is sure: Everything must end in an armistice and in peace negotiations.

Why not, then, discuss those conditions now? What is to be gained by continuing the slaughter? Peace is

a sibyl whose books, i.e., whose treasures, must be bought, and they become dearer and rarer for every day that goes.

We are all acquainted with the phrase. "We must first crush the enemy."

But the enemy cannot be *crushed* — all that is gained is wholesale murder. *Neither of the fighting groups can be crushed.*

And when people declare they do not wish to crush Germany but only its militarism, it is as if one were to say, "I don't want to hurt the porcupine but only to pull out its quills."

Both parties intend to fight "until the bitter end." Every day it becomes more bitter. What may be gained by postponing peace negotiations is lost by prolonging the war.

Has humanity forgotten that there are other means of settling human disputes than by resorting to bombs and grenades?

How will future generations judge us? They will say: In those days, in all Europe, there was not a single statesman worthy of the name. Had there been one statesman on each side before the war, it would never have broken out. Had there been one statesman on either side, it would not have lasted a year. Generals have superseded statesmen.

The future will say: That was a time when wars of religion were called barbarous while no one seemed

to realise that wars of nationality are worse. That was a time when cabinet wars were considered old-fashioned, while no one understood that trade wars are even more brutal. In the history of humanity the wars of religion are a frightful farce. In the history of the world this war is an appalling tragedy.

It would be best if the war were to end without either side being too deeply humiliated. Otherwise the humiliated party will think of nothing but revenge. And it must be remembered that humiliation inflicted on the enemy does not replace a single human life.

Each human life represents a value. Mankind is not alike. There is slight consolation in the fact that our losses were one thousand, and the enemy's ten.

Who knows if among those one thousand there was not a man who would have been the honour of his country, the benefactor of humanity throughout the centuries?

There may have been a Shakespeare or a Newton, a Kant or a Goethe, a Molière or a Pasteur, a Copernicus, a Rubens, a Tolstoi among the hundreds of thousands of twenty-year-old English, French, German, Polish, Belgian, or Russian soldiers who have fallen.

What does a slight change in the boundary line mean in comparison to the loss of such a personality? The gain is temporary; the loss is irretrievable. The gain is that of one country; the loss is humanity's.

Every one can calculate how war destroys the na-

tions' wealth, how their capital dwindles until no one will be able to pay the war indemnities. But the loss in human values, the greatest loss of all, is never calculated.

We see the white race destroying its prestige in the eyes of the black, brown and yellow races. It has called upon their aid and has rewarded them for murdering the whites. How can this but avenge itself?

Europe is committing *hari-kari* for the benefit of Japan, and the adaptable and clever Asiatic people, with an eye on the future, undoubtedly look upon Europe's suicidal mania with considerable astonishment and not little satisfaction.

The press, in belligerent countries, has taken upon itself to excite hatred against the enemy in order to create war enthusiasm. It should remember that the destroying hatred it calls into existence will live long after the war, and will inevitably give birth to new wars. The longer the war lasts, the shorter the coming peace will be.

# IDEALS OR POLITICS?

(June, 1916)

## Reply to Mr. Archer

Dear Mr. William Archer:

First of all let me thank you for the way in which you have phrased your letter to me. It proves that even if we may differ in regard to certain matters, there is no breach in our more than twenty-year-old friendship. I am indebted to you for much information and teaching. I have always valued your judgment, and the admiration inspired by your entirely "whole" character has not been shaken by your open letter to me.

Allow me to explain my views quietly and dispassionately, for even though you know me well, you seem to have misunderstood them. But let me first heave a sigh at meeting so little understanding, not only in Germany, where I was first attacked, but in France, Russia, and England, where the attacks have been repeated and exaggerated. I have — because of a certain ethos without pathos — entirely failed to ingratiate myself with any of the belligerents.

From the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries thinkers and philosophers made it a point of honour to seek truth irrespective of national prejudice and passion

and without allowing themselves to be biased by their environment. For even in the days of the Renaissance and the Reformation every war was understood to be a war between right and wrong, between truth and falsehood. Each of the belligerents, then as now, looked upon his side as the only just one.

In Oehlenschläger's *Aladdin* the following lines occur before Aladdin's struggle with Sinbad:

> "Aladdin! Heavens! What is it you're daring?"
> "Truth against falsehood — good against evil!"

The last line applies equally to the belligerents of today. Both sides look upon the war as a holy war. Definite sides must be taken in it. The right is entirely with the fatherland — the wrong with the enemy.

Both sides prove this by culling from the accumulated and exceedingly complex entanglement of events and actions, one single factor. This is set up as typical and made the basis of argument.

From out the complex world war England at the beginning seized the moment when the wrong *undoubtedly* was on Germany's side; i.e., when Belgium was invaded. From the brutal attack on a brave, unfortunate little nation a general conclusion was drawn to prove that England and her Allies were fighting for the sacredness of treaties and for the rights of small nations and for these high ideals alone.

On their side the Germans, however, also began an

intellectual campaign. They first considered the violation of Belgium a " regrettable " necessity; later on, because of old, fruitless discussions between England and Belgium, during which an English officer had made a few unguarded statements, the Germans were led to believe that England would not have hesitated to land troops in Belgium if this had been to her advantage. Germany's action was thereby justified in the people's eyes.

One would have thought that every thinking and high-minded person in Germany would shrink with shame at German brutality and German atrocities in Belgium. But no; if men are to murder and mutilate each other they must first be convinced of the enemy's baseness. That is why national hatred is stirred up. Belgians had defended themselves, and in the fray civilians had once or twice shot at the German troops. This perfectly natural action was hailed by the Germans as inconceivable and reprehensible. In self-defence the Germans made a series of awful retaliations, and to justify their atrocities said the Belgians put the eyes out of wounded Germans, cut their hands off — were so inhuman, in short, that no punishment could be too severe.

That was how it happened that the very things which made neutrals look upon the campaign as an outrageous invasion did not awaken the slightest qualm in the German conscience.

At first, Germany considered Russia the real enemy. The German Government reminded the people how the Finnish constitution had been broken, how Russia for years had oppressed Poland, annihilated Persia, and as the Germans on the whole undoubtedly are far superior to the Russians in reading and writing, in order, bureaucratic integrity, cleanliness and education as well as in agriculture, trade and industry, they became unshakeably convinced that in this war they represented civilisation against barbarism — yes, even that they were carrying on a sort of war for the liberty of the small nations — for the Jews whom Russia crowds into Ghettos, for the Finns whose rights Russia has trampled on, for the Poles and the Balts whom she oppresses, for the Georgians, the Ukrainians, the White Russians whom she brutalises. As the English declared their intention was to crush Prussian militarism, so the Germans went to the front to destroy Tzarism and militarism as expressed by the Tzar.

As the English took a single fact — the invasion of Belgium — out of the maze of historical events, so the Germans seized the war with Russia. And although for more than a century they had regarded Russia as a friend and ally, representative of sound conservative ideas, they now suddenly looked upon her as the embodiment of barbarism.

On the other hand, when Sir Edward Grey defended his policy in the House of Commons it is significant that

he dwelt on the friendship with France and the anger aroused by Belgium's fate but made no mention of Russia, although the tension between Russia and Austria-Hungary was the cause of the war. France was attacked by Germany only as Russia's ally and she would have remained outside of the war if she had not stood by Russia. You, dear Mr. Archer, make the matter too simple when you compare one of the fighting groups with a murderer who, armed to the teeth, assaults and loots an innocent and unprepared passer-by, and who is finally overthrown and found to have his pockets full of writings which prove that he considers murder a religious duty and robbery a holy deed.

Of course, the origin of the war lay in Austria-Hungary's brutal ultimatum to Serbia, in her refusal to be satisfied with Serbia's extraordinary concessions, and in the significant haste with which she rushed into the weaker neighbouring state.

Furthermore, as Germany — in spite of her anxiety to inform the world of her motives and actions — has been very careful never to publish the telegrams exchanged between Berlin and Vienna preceding the declaration of war, no sane person can doubt an instant that Emperor Franz Joseph declared war on Serbia with Emperor William's full assent. No reasoning being can entertain any doubt as to the origin of the present war, nor as to who threw the match which set the huge haystack aflame.

Nevertheless the war has not sprung from relatively so simple a matter as Austria-Hungary's punitive expedition into a little country, which, probably not untruthfully, Austria declared she did not wish to conquer but merely to punish.

*The war is a logical result of ten years' passionate and ceaseless competition between the Central Powers and the Triple Entente.* It was Russia's and Austria-Hungary's struggle for the supremacy of the Balkans which lay behind the attack on Serbia in the end of July, 1914.

During the First Balkan War, through the intrigues of a Russian diplomat, Bulgaria pledged herself, side by side with Serbia, to do all in her power to frustrate Austria's plans. In 1912, Russia foresaw a war with Austria in a not distant future, and tried to unite the Slavs so as to divide Austria's Slav provinces between herself and the Balkan states. In the end of 1912, Germany increased her army and Bethmann-Hollweg discussed the possibility of a struggle between Slavs and Teutons.

As a result of Germany's move, France introduced three years' military service; Russia evolved a very elaborate programme of military reforms which according to the London *Times* (June 3, 1914) were of a nature to "make Germany nervous." And Germany grew nervous. There came an unrest over the German press, which began to speak of Russian militarism as England speaks of the German.

Germany thought that Russia would have completed her military preparations in 1916. There was no time to lose if the Slavs were not to split Austria-Hungary. Action had to be taken, preferably without causing war with Russia, and Germany hoped the Slav alliance could be broken and Serbia crushed without Russia's interference since Russia had not protested when Austria annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina,— a fact one would have thought of serious import to Russia.

Why was Germany mistaken in her assumption that Russia would not go to war?

Apparently because Russia knew what Germany (curiously enough) did not know, namely that Russia now could count on the assistance of England as well as of France. The Russians understood what the Germans had not grasped, that the Triple Entente was much more solidly cemented than the Triple Alliance. The Russian ministry had drawn the right conclusion from the naval review at Portland just before the war. Undoubtedly Sir Edward Grey tried to avoid war by every means within his power at the precise moment it threatened to break out. But he had bound himself and England to France by ten years' negotiations and to Russia by seven years' secret negotiations. Besides the entire theory of the European equilibrium threw him into the arms of eastern Europe.

Therefore the war is not merely the result of a sudden Austro-German attack, but of ten years' competition be-

tween two rival groups of Powers. It is also an instructive example of what European conditions are in times of peace. As in Heiberg's *A Soul after Death,* the soul learns with surprise that on earth it was really in hell, so many a man will doubtlessly be surprised to learn that in peace he was in a latent state of war. But this is so. Even in times of peace, people — like the speaker in Ibsen's poem —" thrust with joy the torpedo under the ark." Our mediæval social life is seething, to the point of insanity, with the unreasonable. Consider our religious conditions and our educational systems — the injustice on every side, in economical matters as well as in the relations between the sexes. One out of every two decisions made in times of peace is an expression of old, antiquated prejudices.

But, above all, in peace as well as in war, the stronger always has his way. The saying that might primes right is not something which Germany has monopolised for use in war. It is characteristic of all Europe, even in times of peace. And surely not only in political matters but in social relations as well. The brutality of war is possible only because its foundation has been built in times of peace.

When French correspondents besieged me and asked why I had not given vent to my *indignation* at the fate of Louvain and Reims, and when I replied honestly and sincerely that if I were to protest every time my sense of right and my humane feeling were outraged I

should *never accomplish anything else,* I was scornfully jeered and asked if I daily witnessed events comparable to the bombardment of open cities, and the brutalising of civilian populations? My answer is *Yes,* for such is life to-day. Humanity has not progressed beyond that point.

When La Salle in his day explained to the workingmen that forcing the Government to grant a constitution was not a matter of *right* but of *might,* he was attacked and insulted, and the Prussian premier, Graf Schwerin, under the applause of the House retorted that in Prussia at least, right ruled might. In his pamphlet, *Right and Might,* La Salle replied: "If I had created the world, it is very probable that, quite exceptionally, I should have acted in accordance with Graf Schwerin's wishes, and made right rule might. For this harmonises with my ethical standard and my moral ideals. But unfortunately, I am not in a position to create the world and must therefore deny all responsibility, praise as well as blame, for its real organisation."

The difference between La Salle's point of view and that of Germany of to-day is that Germany not only accepts as a fact, but considers it quite just and even moral, that there should be no other right than that created by might.

The Germans are not hypocritical, and do not pretend to fight for anything but the power which they claim ought to be theirs. England and France, how-

ever, seem to sway in the illusion that they, in co-operation with Russia, are really fighting for right and justice, for the placing of small nations on an equal footing with the larger ones,— for all ideals of humanity, in short.

It would be interesting, dear Mr. Archer, if you would tell us for which ideals Russia is fighting at the present moment? Or for which *ideal* England fights when she makes as many German babies as possible die of hunger, when she establishes a state of siege in Ireland, does away with Persia's independence, and when with the word "Nationality" on her lips she gives half a dozen small nations over to enslavement? Or for which *ideal* France and England are fighting when they strangle little Greece?

We all know that Great Britain is remarkable for her political liberty, which Germany is far from having attained. We know that in Great Britain there is a sort of limited free thought — least developed on religious and sexual questions — but such as it is much deeper and more sincere than in Germany. We Danes are unable to love Prussia — to use a very mild expression. Three thousand North Schleswigers have fallen as enforced participants in a fight for the enemy against their friends.

Prussia's governmental system in Schleswig has been unable to tune us to love, although it may have inspired us with other feelings than hatred, namely surprise at

the Germans' incomprehensible stupidity and their absolute lack of the most elemental psychology in handling foreign elements in the empire.

We have watched England's treatment of Ireland during seven hundred years, and we compare and remain silent, for England, now and again, does show a tendency to make up for the injustice of the past.

And we know that in spite of everything English liberalism is a reality, just as we know that French culture, where it has reached its greatest heights, is more liberal than the German. But when the English speak of Germany's lust of power or when the Germans speak of England's brutal egoism, the accusations leave us cold, from both sides.

It may happen that a nation fighting for its interest also furthers civilisation. England has shown that. Once every hundred years a statesman may act nobly and unselfishly out of high-mindedness and pride, as George Washington. After the War of Independence had been successfully carried out with the help of the French under Lafayette, he declared himself neutral during the war between England and France. Unlike Wilson at the present moment and grasping American money-makers, he forbade under the severest penalty and imprisonment the exportation of arms and munitions to either belligerent.

But, as a rule, statesmen are not actuated by moral considerations but by political ones. All are selfish and

have been so from time immemorial. No nation, and least of all a great Power in our days, offers millions of men and billions of pounds sterling for any other object than this nation's political advancement and economic advantage.

## LET JUSTICE REIGN!

### Reply to Mr. Archer

Dear Mr. Archer:

After every public expression of opinion, I am, as you may imagine, bombarded with letters, signed or anonymous, complaining of my ignorance or insulting me. The very same day you published your open letter to me I received with the German mail a note, as far as I can judge, from a business man in Mainz. He accuses me of having been outrageously unjust to Germany in the *Appeal* which caused your English displeasure. The letter reads in part: "I see by the *Frankfurter Zeitung* that in an article on peace you say both sides claim to have been attacked. Haven't you read the Belgian documents (published by Mittler und Sohn, Berlin) or the pamphlet *Belgian Neutrality* (published by Reimers, Berlin) containing the correspondence between the British Ministry of War and the Belgian General Staff, found in Brussels? These documents prove conclusively that the Triple Entente was animated by a desire to encircle Germany and to crush her at the first opportunity." The writer has been told that with one exception the Danish press has never men-

tioned Russia's barbarous treatment of German prisoners. It is not difficult to recognise the manœuvres of the foreign press to injure Germany. "Rousseau says in his *Confessions:* 'When you know men you cannot help despising them.' If he were still in this worst of all worlds he would undoubtedly say: 'When you know *neutrals* you cannot help *despising* them.'" The writer thereupon sends me his respectful compliments.

You see, dear Mr. Archer, that the statement which you consider biased in favour of Germany only brings me from Germany assurances of being despised.

I will have to try to console myself as best I can.

You, as an Englishman, are convinced that Germany alone is responsible for the war, and my unknown German correspondent is equally convinced that England alone is responsible for it. Future historians will have to settle the dispute and perhaps they will find that the whole question has been wrongly stated. That is my feeling.

* * *

Dear Mr. Archer, you seem to regard it as a sort of moral weakness that I should plead for peace at a time when justice has not yet been meted out by the Allies' decisive victory. "The worst that could happen," you say, "would be a victory for the great lie."

Therefore let sacrifices be heaped upon sacrifices, let ruin and destruction spread still further to advance the good cause! —

At the very beginning of the war I felt it would end as a draw, and I have frequently written that in all probability there will be no overwhelming victory for either side. And my views have been strengthened by the events of the past twenty-eight months.

Yet peace is bound to come some time.

Before Prussian militarism has been crushed? the Allies ask in anger.

But militarism cannot be crushed by militarism, war cannot be driven out of the world by war, oppression by oppression, evil by evil.

As the fundamental causes of the war are of a political-economic nature, the final agreement must be based on a political-economic understanding. And as such an agreement can be made now, it is nothing short of criminal to continue the wholesale murder.

If the war is to end by an overwhelming victory for one side it will probably have to last two years more, at least. By that time, however, Europe's capital will be exhausted, and still more misery will have spread over the earth.

By that time the miserable serfs who in times of peace sweat in the factories, and who, in times of war by means of the highly praised instrument of oppression called compulsory military service are sent into the fire like slaves, will have arrived at such a frenzied state of exaltation and despair that the social revolution, of which there has been so much talk, will become a reality.

It has been kept down as long as mankind retained a jot of common sense. But if the war lasts much more it will burst forth and rage as war madness rages now; it will follow in the wake of the war as the Commune did in Paris in 1871, and the few remnants of a higher intellectual civilisation which the war may have spared will be levelled to the ground with as little mercy as the beautiful churches and halls are destroyed in the north of France to-day.

Yet this revolution will have to be made by women and cripples; there will scarcely be enough men left.

I know very well that war is popular in England. But that does not move my stony heart. The masses think as they are cleverly led to think. Has any war been more popular in England than the war aganist the colonies when they tried to break away from England to become the United States? And how is that war thought of in England to-day?

In spite of the excitations of the sensational press, who can find enough opposition between England and Germany to warrant a continuation of slaughter?

As far back as April 5, 1916, the German Chancellor, Bethmann-Hollweg, declared: "Europe, for the sake of its peace-loving population, must be a Europe of peaceful endeavour. The peace that is to come after the war must be a durable peace. It must not contain the seed of a new war, but the seed for a definite and final peaceful settlement of European affairs."

April 10, 1916, Mr. Asquith, the British premier, replied:

"Great Britain and France entered the war not to strangle Germany, not to wipe her off the map of Europe, not to destroy or mutilate her national life, surely not to interfere with what the Chancellor terms 'the free exercise of her peaceful endeavours.' The Allies' object in the war is to pave the way for an international system which will insure the establishment of equal rights for all civilised nations."

If both parties were sincere, however, there ought to be a possibility of reaching an understanding.

One of the most desperate phases of present war, however, is the way in which the leaders in belligerent countries, man of science and culture, unhesitatingly and under deafening applause cater to the prejudices of their own country. They are as blind and unable to look truth in the face as the cheapest newspaper they read and condemn. Each one defends his country's holy cause and falsifies history. All write the same way. It is only necessary to replace the word German by English, or Russian by Hungarian, and the articles read exactly alike.

Blind patriotism has devoured the love of truth.

It was not like that before. Once upon a time thinkers and philosophers honoured truth.

Erasmus wrote: "There is nothing so ridiculous, so baneful, so destructive, as war; nothing less worthy

of mankind, not to mention the Christian. . . . War is worse than bestial; no wild beast is as frightful as man is to man. Wild animals fight with natural weapons only, while we prepare for general slaughter with weapons which Nature never knew. . . . What tragedies are enacted on the battle-field for the most miserable pretexts! For the sake of one or another antiquated prejudice, doubtful lust of land! . . . Purely fiendish destruction is called a holy war. . . . What is war but murder and theft perpetrated by masses attacking other masses!"

Pierre Bayle in his *Dictionnaire* considers Erasmus' essay on war one of the most beautiful ever written.

Few realists have hated war as Voltaire. Few have proved its absurdity as he. He was probably the first to point out that after a few years the victor suffered as much as the vanquished.

Voltaire attacks preventive war whose motive is, "You must take by surprise and crush a neighbour who has not attacked you but who might intend to do so. In other words, jeopardise your own land on the chance of ruining another's." Voltaire has described the madness and wildness of war, has painted its horrors, pointed to the irony of priests blessing flags and banners, which always implies killing a neighbour whom, according to the Gospel, one should love. He asks: "What has the Church done to stop such crimes?" Bourdaloue preached against unchastity, but has he ever

delivered a sermon against the murder, robbery, and universal madness which is ruining the world? "You pitiful guardians of souls," he cries, "you argue about a pinprick and lift not your voices against the curse that is tearing us into a thousand pieces!"

In *Micromegas* he scourges man's desire to hurt his neighbour by war. The small figure from the earth says to the large inhabitant of the planet Sirius: "Do you know that a hundred thousand creatures like myself with hats on their heads at the present moment are killing a hundred thousand other such animals because they wear turbans? Or are killed by them?" (Allusion to Russia's war against Turkey in 1737.)

What would he say to-day when a patriot like Romain Rolland is stamped as a traitor to his country because he admitted he still had friends among the German people?

I know very well what you, dear Mr. Archer, will reply to the quotations from Erasmus, Bayle, and Voltaire on war in general. You say: "But justice! What can humanity gain by allowing it to be trodden upon? Is life worth living without it?"

Alas, dear Mr. Archer, justice is a heavenly goddess. But she wears, as you know, a band across her eyes.

As you, Mr. Archer, understand our language, you are doubtlessly familiar with our famous poet Wessel's clever little satire: *The Smith and the Baker,* which corresponds to the Polish-Jewish story of the *Shoe-*

*maker from Kilikow.* It deals with a young, able-bodied blacksmith (the only one in the village) who in a fit of passion committed murder and who, according to the law as conceived by mortals, should be hung therefor. Four or five of his fellow citizens intercede in his behalf, however. The judge objects:

"Consider, dear sirs, that a life has been taken. It must be redeemed by another life."

The spokesman for the group of fellow citizens replies:

"Here lives a poor, decrepit baker,
Who, by death, will soon be carried off.
We have two bakers,— let us hang the elder!
Life would still pay for the life that has been taken."

The judge reflects and finally agrees to the clever suggestion:

"I hereby consent,
Since life must pay for life,
To have the elder baker hang for the blacksmith's crime,
As suitable, well deserved punishment for himself
And a fearful, instructive example for his fellows."

This is a truthful picture of the justice which you, dear Mr. Archer and other Allied authors, will gain by continuing the war. Those who are being shot down and crippled, whose sons and husbands are being carried away, who are being swallowed in the great horror on both sides, are as innocent of the whole revolting war

as the baker who was hung because the blacksmith committed murder.

Suppose it were possible to point to half a dozen men whom one could blame for the war. Powerful men like Graf Tisza, the German Crown Prince, Sir Edward Grey, Mr. Sazonoff, M. Delcassé, writers like General Bernhardi, Maximilian Harden, the Englishman Maxse, and the Frenchman Barrès. Let us imagine, for an instant, that they could be called the guilty ones.

Would so-called justice be meted out if these men were tortured and executed with all the atrocities of former days? No man in his senses could think so. How much less, then, is justice carried out by obliging a few more million men to be shot in the trenches while a few extra million civilians, women and children, are doomed to death, mutilation and misery!

I knew very well, dear Mr. Archer, that an essential condition would be Belgium's and Serbia's re-establishment as independent nations. I do not see why this should not be possible. Even if Germany for the time being holds a certain amount of territory, she is weak economically and must pay for the cessation of the British blockade.

Incidentally it seems to me that in regard to the peace programme the Allies were a trifle hasty in deciding everything at the beginning of the war. While with not very ingratiating candour a large faction in Germany demanded that the Government annex large portions of

territory, the French at once had the whole programme of liberty arranged. Alsace-Lorraine was to be returned to France, Denmark was to acquire her lost provinces; Poland was to become an independent state under Russian authority. All friends of France hope that Alsace-Lorraine will become French again. Russian Poland, for the time being, is still in the hands of the Germans and Austrians, and if it is to gain any independence it would seem as if this would have to be granted by the Central Empires rather than by Russia.

I do not think I love justice less than Mr. Archer or any of the other belligerent writers. I burn with just as passionate a desire as they to see it fulfilled. Only I do not believe it is quite as concrete and palpable as they. And the justice which consists in having millions of defenceless people bleed and be killed for the mistakes and crimes committed by a few short-sighted politicians — from such justice let all powers preserve us!

# BELGIUM — PERSIA

## Reply to Mr. Archer

(July, 1916)

A Danish writer is at a great disadvantage in polemics with foreigners. For even if they have seen the detached article which caused their displeasure and even if they have read it carefully — which scarcely ever happens — they know nothing whatsoever of the other statements he has made on the same subject and to refute him they use the very same arguments which he himself has used again and again. They credit him with intentions which not only are foreign to him but which he has distinctly combatted. In their excitement they create such a confusion that he finds himself involved as in a barbed wire net of absurdities which must first be cleared away before he can begin to argue with his opponent.

When a writer in a world language expresses himself concisely about a question he takes it for granted that his readers or others who may agree or disagree with him are familiar with his previous utterances on the subject. He does not have to repeat himself. The Danish

writer addressing the foreigner notes with a shock that *nothing* is taken for granted where he is concerned. He is rudely taken to task for matters of which he knows much more than they — matters in which he has shown his authority again and again. On such premises polemics easily degenerate into vulgar wrangling, pedantic hair splitting as to how certain phrases are to be interpreted.

Half of what Mr. Archer brings out against me in his "*Colour blind Neutrality — An open letter to Dr. Georg Brandes,*" I have, in other words, either written myself or else refuted. I could not, without a discussion equally irksome to the reader and to me, explain it, and I therefore prefer to group my opinions on certain main issues and thus present them.

Europe and Asia each have theirs.

## I

### Belgium

There can scarcely be any difference between Mr. Archer and myself as to the feelings inspired by Belgium's fate. I know Captain de Gerlache's book and sympathise with the people on whom misfortunes poured.

Taking into consideration the anger felt not only in Europe but in all America as well, it would seem as if the Germans had acted not only more honourably, but

more wisely, if they had marched at Verdun instead of attracting the odium of the world by attacking a neutral state, especially one whose neutrality they themselves had guaranteed.

It is but natural that England and France, who are in debt to Belgium's sacrifice, should lay stress on Belgian heroism and praise the country to the skies at the cost of the nations which, according to Mr. Archer, have been content to reap "the satisfactions of neutrality,"—satisfactions embittered, among other things, by England's efforts to starve Germany by starving them.

On the other hand, Belgium's fate has not only a sentimental but a political aspect. And as far as the political side is concerned, it does not seem at all clear to me that Great Britain has done her entire duty.

As is well known, England, in 1839, together with the other Powers, guaranteed Belgian neutrality. She went on record as sponsor for this neutrality, although no provisions were made as to how England would defend it in the event of a Continental war. Great Britain could not give any such promise for the simple reason that she would be unable to live up to it. Belgium's neutrality could only be assured by a large body of troops which would not be at England's disposal in the event of such a war.

Now the possibility of a Franco-German war had been a matter of discussion for several years. The general staffs in the various countries of Europe were famil-

iar with it. The most probable strategetic moves of the war had been discussed beforehand in the various countries' military reviews. According to authoritative opinions, Germany, in order to deal France a rapid and decisive blow, would pass through Belgium, as the French border was so strongly defended that it could be forced only with the greatest difficulty. In other words, military writers in the various countries considered Germany's march through Belgium her only chance of success. All knew that Germany had built her network of railroads up against the Belgian frontier. In September, 1914, Lord Winston Churchill said in Parliament that he had been familiar with the German plan for three years. As early as February, 1914, a layman and private citizen — the author of these lines — said in a public lecture that this was the German plan.

— The only nation that seems to have had no realisation of this design was France, which, curiously enough, took no steps to oppose it. Still, Mr. Archer and I are discussing England, not France.—

Under these conditions what did England do to prevent the violation of right, the overstepping of the frontier? Did she beforehand threaten every Power, which might attempt to break in on Belgian territory, with England's enmity?

If England was not strong enough to defend Belgium by force of arms, she at least owed the little, dangerously exposed country a piece of unselfish advice. Belgium

should have been warned that it would probably be impossible to transport a sufficient number of British troops in time to be of real service. She should have been told that the French army, unprepared as it was, would not be able to bring up reinforcements rapidly.

If, after such a hint, Belgium still preferred to resist immensely more powerful masses of troops instead of merely bowing in protest under exigencies of a *force majeure* and granting a passage which she could not, after all, hinder — then England could have let her hands lie idle, and Belgium would have had only herself to blame for the misfortunes which her proud, noble attitude brought upon her.

But, to begin with, Belgium seems to have counted on a much greater assistance than the handful of troops which, at the last minute, were rushed into Antwerp; and in the second place to have hesitated slightly as to which course to take. As late as the third of August the British minister in Brussels cabled to the foreign office that the French Government had offered the Belgian Government five *corps d'armée,* but had received the following answer. "We are sincerely grateful for the French Government's offer of assistance. For the moment, however, we do not intend to appeal to the Powers' guarantee. The Belgian Government will decide later as to the course of action it finds necessary to take."

Even at the eleventh hour, therefore, as far as one can

see, Belgium reflected as to the possibility of assuming the attitude of an enforcedly neutral onlooker. If she had given in to force and accepted the indemnity offered which could have been increased to cover all damage done by German troops, Belgium undoubtedly would have lacked the aureole of heroism which now shines around her, but she would have been spared destruction and still more cruel humiliations. And no sane person could have classed her action as lacking honour or even wisdom. Assuredly poor Belgium is now highly praised and admired, but still she has, in the main, served as a cat's paw for France and England.

## II

In the eloquent brochure which Mr. Archer has issued against me, he is too much of a gentleman to bring the discussion into personal channels.

Nevertheless, I cannot well accept the picture he draws of me for his countrymen. For (like my German, French, and Russian opponents) he conveys the idea that while my abilities may be considerable, I lack all notion of justice, that I try to find the mean between truth and falsehood, and that I am unable to feel the indignation which makes a man play a strong and decisive part in any cause.

If, in this world war, I haven't taken any one definite side as all citizens in belligerent and many in neutral countries, it is on the contrary because my indigna-

tion is too great, my pessimism too deep, my doubts too well founded, my idealism too unshakeable. Neither belligerent group answers to my conception of justice and righteousness, unselfishness, nobility or benefit to humanity. Again and again my accusers attack me by the scornful "*neutral.*" Mr. Archer says once again: The mode of thought that conduces to neutrality is so low that "no matter how much sorrow the war has caused him or will bring him — for nothing in the world would he be a neutral."

Extraordinary how "neutrality" changes in the life of nations! When I was twenty-two I did not dream I should live to see Denmark ridiculed by France and England because she remained *neutral!* In 1864 Denmark *all alone* fought Prussia and Austria, the two powers against which Russia, England, France, Italy, Serbia, Belgium, Montenegro, Portugal, Japan, and the United States as munition makers now have been united for what is becoming the third year. And they are still seeking *new allies.* In 1864 all these powers remained neutral. Not a single one moved a finger against the two Central Powers, in spite of the fact that Denmark accepted war because she relied on definite promises made by the English Government to the effect that "Denmark would not be allowed to stand alone. . . ."

And Denmark is abused and called "*neutral*" by the Germans, who assaulted us at that time and now inform us that there is nothing as despicable as neu-

trality. And in her reduced and helpless position, Denmark is scorned to-day by the very same nations, the English and French who, with unpardonable lack of foresight for their own interests, stubbornly remained *neutral,* that time when Denmark with her two million inhabitants, all alone, bore the brunt of the arms of the powers whom England and France have set half the world in motion to overcome, if possible.

## BELGIUM — PERSIA

## III

### Persia

Persia is the name of Asiatic Belgium.

Persia had long been in a state of decadence. As her reigning house, as well as the highest aristocracy, were among the most corrupt of the Orient, her independence stood on a very tottering foundation. The rivalry between Russia and England affected the country, and Russia was given practically free reins when England became engrossed in the Boer War.

In 1906, after Russia's defeat in the Japanese War, a powerful reform movement fermented in the Far as well as in the Near East. China became a republic, Turkey acquired a parliament; in Persia the movement concentrated in a rebellion against the Shah's tyranny and against the domination of Russian influence at the court.

The movement began by a general strike in midsummer. No less than 12,000 Persians sought refuge in the British consulate in Teheran. The Shah was compelled to grant a constitution, and the people ascribed

this victory to England's unseen influence quite as much as to their own efforts.

Persia's first parliament (Meilis), was opened in October, 1906, and England's prestige in the old cultural country had never been greater.

Then Sir Edward Grey, without consulting the Persians made an agreement with Russia. Persia was surprised and hurt to find that England (as well as Russia) looked upon the country as a mere stretch of land, a means of granting concessions, a market for trade. Both Powers agreed to respect Persia's sovereignty and to guarantee her integrity but then divided the country between them just as Poland was divided in her day. In the north, Russia took half the country — the rich and peopled territories and cities of Teheran, Tabriz, and Ispahan. England took the narrow strip in the southwest, barren and sparsely inhabited. Between the two districts remained a neutral band of deserts and mountains.

Because we have always admired England as the home of political liberty, of free trade, as the only country which the small nations could look upon as an eventual protector, disappointment was intense when England, in her dealings with Persia, went back on her past, her principles — yea, on her deepest, truest interests.

When England made the agreement with Russia, Russia was a defeated, impoverished nation, whose army

was non-existent and whose population was in a state of revolution. When England, through Persia, caught her under the arms and held her up, this was only a play *for Russia's good-will and alliance* in view *of a coming war between England and Germany.*

Sir Edward Grey paid a high price. Englishmen who, like Lord Curzon (former viceroy of India), were familiar with Indian conditions, were much opposed to the arrangement. It is an old principle of English politics that Persia's independence be maintained to act as a buffer between Great Britain and Russia. Evidently Sir Edward Grey counted on England's and Russia's friendship lasting eternally. Russia's way to India was now shortened, and England noted as first result of the agreement the building of a Russian railway from Baku via Teheran and Bombay.

The agreement was signed August 31, 1907. To reassure the people, the English minister issued an explanatory note supposed to represent both the English and Russian Governments. They claimed to be united in their efforts to maintain Persian sovereignty and integrity; they would not interfere with Persian affairs unless acts of violence were perpetrated on persons or property of English or Russian subjects. The Anglo-Russian understanding would enable Persia to concentrate all her efforts on internal reforms. The rumours about England's and Russia's grasping designs

were unfounded. Neither of the two Powers would allow the other to interfere with Persia's affairs under the pretext of protecting their interests.

The agreement, in other words, seemed to imply a British guarantee against Russian encroachments.

In the meantime, a new Shah, who both as Crown Prince and ruler had sworn allegiance to the Constitution, ascended the throne. He repudiated the constitution he himself had agreed to defend. In 1908 Parliament determined to depose him for abolishing the Constitution. But both the Russian Minister and the English Chargé d'Affaires informed the Persian Minister of Foreign Affairs that the Shah's deposition would not be tolerated. If it took place Russia would interfere. Persians preferred to be tyrannised by their own to being oppressed by foreigners, and allowed the Shah to remain.

The Shah was then in a position to carry out his *coup d'État* in Teheran. The Russian Colonel Liakof met but slight opposition when he, at the head of his Russian-Persian brigade, bombarded the House of Parliament while the Shah killed the deputies and the newspaper proprietors who had neglected to seek refuge at the British Legation. But while Teheran surrendered immediately, the people of Tabriz defeated the Shah's army and resisted a siege for nine months. When it at last was known that the inhabitants were starving to

death, and that the few Europeans who had remained were in mortal danger, a Russian army, in April, 1909, marched into Tabriz.

Sir Edward Grey approved of this step and promised that the sojourn of the Russian troops should be merely temporary. —The Russian garrison, however, has not yet left the city.—

In the meantime, encouraged by the resistance of Tabriz, a Persian army marched against Teheran from the north and from the south, defeated Liakof and his Cossacks and deposed the Shah. A prince regent was nominated for the Shah's eleven-year-old son, and a new Parliament was elected to continue the work broken off by Liakof.

For the next two years Persia was peaceful, and its anxieties were of a financial nature. The cash box was empty and Persian noblemen refused to pay their taxes. In order to escape them they registered as living under Russian protection. Robbery, carried out by the followers of the former Shah, was becoming a national plague, and was made a pretext for calling upon Russian aid and Russian troops.

Persia had to take up a loan, and England and Russia offered to float it provided they could control expenditures. To escape such control Persia negotiated directly with a banking concern in London. The English Secretary of Foreign Affairs objected, however, and demanded that Persia allow the English police to or-

ganise South Persia. In case of refusal he threatened to send an Indian army into the country.

In the meantime, in 1911, an American business man, Morgan Shuster, arrived. He was sent by the Government of the United States to reorganise Persia's finances. He showed unusual strength of character and executive ability, inspired such confidence in Parliament that it accorded him almost autocratic power. Morgan Shuster engaged an English major, who spoke Persian and was familiar with the country to form a gendarme corps to collect taxes. The Persian Government confiscated the property of the brother of the former Shah, who had allied himself with the exiled monarch who was now preparing to attack the country, and established Morgan Shuster in this brother's palace at Teheran. But the corps of gendarmes were beaten by Russian Cossacks, and Russian troops marched toward Teheran.

Sir Edward Grey then intervened and advised the Persians to make some settlement. He guaranteed that the Russian army would not penetrate further into the country if Russia's ultimatum were accepted. According to this Morgan Shuster was to be immediately deposed, Russia and England were to have the power of veto in the appointment of all foreigners in the employ of the Persian Government, and an indemnity was to be paid to Russia.

As Parliament took Shuster's side, it was dissolved.

Thereby Persia's independence was at an end. Russia carried through all her demands, and as the Russian press cried for vengeance, this was taken in Tabriz where a handful of volunteers had attacked the Russian troops. A court martial was established, and twenty-six of the country's leading men were hung. The highest clergy of the country were hung on a great Persian religious fête day. It was, according to the remarks of an English author, as if the Germans had hung the Archbishop of Malines on Good Friday.

Since then Persia has lain paralysed.

England and Russia, together, have created an irremediable chaos. The British Government gained control of the valuable oil wells, through the English company having concessions on them; Persia is expected to furnish most of the petroleum required by the English fleet. Russia acquired a fertile territory where she can send her colonists, and also a stretch of land to the northwest of Persia which stands in relation to Russia and Turkey as Belgium to France and Germany. During the war Russia violated this territory as Germany violated Belgium. In vain Persia declared herself neutral. A Russian army marched through Persia to Van. The only difference is that the Russians were beaten.

Sir Edward Grey did not go to war to maintain *Persia's* neutrality. The solemn promise to respect the integrity of Asiatic Belgium was broken like Prussia's solemn promise to respect European Belgium.

All who have admired England as a free nation have regretted to see her co-operate with Russia to crush a small country at the very moment it was becoming an independent state, just as Poland was crushed when, May 3, 1791, she had acquired a remarkable constitution.

In order to forestall the cry that I, in writing as above, have been misled by documents from German sources, I merely wish to remark that I have never seen a German reference to this matter. I have drawn only on English sources, just as, in my previous articles, I have relied entirely upon English authorities. It is one of the redeeming and beautiful traits of Great Britain that the political judgment of many an Englishman remains unaffected by coercive forces or party passions. E. D. Morel is a great example. C. H. Norman is another. E. D. Morel who ten years ago was valued as highly in France as in England, and who bears the undoubted stamp of a great personality, may view without anxiety the loss of his position in Parliament in England, and his popularity in France; he is far above his opponents.

As far as I know he has never expressed any opinion on Persia; but there can be no doubt of what he feels.

If, with regard to Great Britain and Persia, conditions are as stated above, how can anybody like Mr. Archer look upon the world war from the simplicist moral judicial point of view: Truth against falsehood, good against evil?

Conditions are by no means so simple. England — in spite of much that is justified and fair in her actions — has by no means monopolised right, and in spite of her fundamental love of liberty, she is very far from being the defender of liberty against the representatives of despotism.

The word *right* does not bring much political advancement or as La Salle, in *Assisenrede* expressed it:

"In the life of a nation right is a dangerous principle, for laws are the expression of the *desire* of the community, never *rule* the community." And he says that right is a "dark crutch" to lean on.

When Louis XIV in 1647 took ten districts in Alsace, and in 1681 deprived Strassburg, too, of its privileges, Alsace became French by the doubtful right of conquest. When in 1871 Alsace was annexed by the Germans on the ground that old injustice was to be compensated, public opinion in Europe felt that France was most unjustly mutilated, although the treaty of Frankfort *legally* made Alsace part of the German Empire.

I imagine that every one agrees, more or less, that when German business men and bankers demand the annexation of Belgium and the north of France it is because they look upon these territories as *coal*. This is called reprehensible. But may it not equally well be admitted that when Persia is regarded by the English foreign department as *petroleum* needed by the English navy, right is also flouted?

In both cases economic demands take the place of right.

Why then despise and blame neutrals for being unable to judge between right and wrong, and to pretend that the belligerents alone know on which side is right?

An epigram of Goethe reads thus:

"Goats! To the left!" Thus will the Judge command.
"To the right, assemble, ye mild sheep!"
Yet, it is to be hoped the Judge will also say:
"Opposite me, ye men of reason."

There will be no crush.

# CONCLUSION

## Reply to Mr. Archer

(July, 1916)

It is agreeable to meet an opponent like Mr. Archer because his polemics are objective. Outside of England the tone, as a rule, is one of common vulgarity. Mr. Archer's attacks spring from sincere conviction but he does not deny his opponent's culture and belief in ideals.

Nevertheless, as I frequently find personal insinuations in the Danish as well as in the foreign press, not to mention anonymous letters which reek with the odour of the flower of the Danish rabble, allow me once for all to state:

That I have the pleasure of being the member of three prominent London clubs. I am honourary member of three English scientific societies and have been honourary president of one. A Scotch university conferred the honourary title of L.L.D. upon me. It is evident that I am therefore tied to Great Britain by strong bonds and am deeply indebted to the literary and artistic worlds of England, and I have always felt myself strongly attracted by English life and spirit.

I have never received the slightest honour or recognition of any kind whatsoever in the German Empire, nor

from Austria-Hungary,— not even the red ribbon of a fourth-class decoration. I have never been a member of any German association or of any German society. I have never received distinctions of any kind from a German university. Because of my opinions on the Danes in South Jutland I have for more than twenty years been unpopular in Germany. One could hardly say I am bribed to plead Germany's cause. When I have stated the truth as I saw it, the reason is not necessarily that I am fishing for the Kaiser's favour, as insanely insinuated by Mr. Clemençeau.

Mr. Archer's fundamental idea is that only the Central Powers (i.e., certain of their men alone) are responsible for the war. His fundamental thought is one often expressed by the Allies: the absolute unpreparedness for war proves clearly that the badly prepared part was the lamb, the other the wolf.

To my mind, if a Continental power in the summer of 1914 was not prepared, this was due to nothing but the carelessness, negligence, disorder, lack of forethought of its leaders. And yet the nation might have hoped vaguely to win back by war the provinces torn away by force of arms. It is even possible that such a war was looked upon as a sacred duty, and that, in spite of it all, military affairs have been neglected.

And what I here say about a Continental power, applies equally to a sea power.

## I

The 27th of November, 1911, in London a question arose in Parliament as to whether the Morocco agreement between England and France made in April, 1904, implied that England was to lend military support on land or on sea and if so, upon what conditions? Answer was given to the effect that diplomatic co-operation did not imply military or naval aid. The same day Sir Edward Grey said: "Let me try to put an end to some of the suspicions with regard to secret agreements. We have laid before the House the secret articles of the Agreement with France in 1904. There are no other secret engagements. . . . We have not made a single secret Article of any kind since we came into office."

On August 3rd, 1914, Sir Edward Grey read in Parliament, among other things, the following paragraph from a document which he had sent the French ambassador in London November 22nd, 1912.

"You have pointed out that if either Government had grave reason to expect an unprovoked attack by a third Power it might become essential to know whether it could in that event depend on the armed assistance of the other. I agree that if either Government had grave reason to expect an unprovoked attack by a third Power or something that threatened general peace" (a very latitudinous remark) "it should immediately discuss with the other whether both Governments should act to-

gether to prevent aggression and to preserve peace, and if so what measures they would be prepared to take in common." In the same speech he said: "We are not a party to the Franco-Russian Alliance. We do not even know the terms of that Alliance."

(A most remarkable statement.)

In February, 1913, Lord Hugh Cecil said during the Address debate: "It is generally believed that the nation has been bound not exactly by a treaty, but by an agreement created by the assurance given by a member of the Cabinet to send an expeditionary force to operate on the Continent under certain conditions." Mr. Asquith here interrupted the speaker with the words: "I feel bound to say this is not true."

The 24th of March, 1913, the Prime Minister was again asked if British military forces under certain conditions could not be required to operate on the Continent. He replied: "As has been repeatedly stated, this country is not under any obligation not public and known to Parliament which compels it to take part in any war."

Was this answer in accordance with the truth?

As the same rumours were afloat again the following year, Sir Edward Grey, the 28th of April, 1914, declared: "The situation is the same as that explained by the Prime Minister in his reply of March 24, 1913."

June 11, 1914, Sir Edward Grey replied to the same question. "There are no unpublished agreements

which would restrict or hamper the freedom of the Government or of Parliament to decide whether or not Great Britain should participate in a war."

This may, without exaggeration, be called sophistry.

There was the letter of November 12, 1912, written in frightful diplomatic style, but which unmistakably associated England with every military adventure into which Russia might drag France.

The end of the Foreign Minister's speech was still more remarkable: "But if any agreement were to be concluded that made it necessary to withdraw or modify the Prime Minister's statement of last year it ought, and I suppose that it would be laid before Parliament."

## II

The above quotations from parliamentary speeches show that England was not unacquainted with the thought of a war with Germany.

Mr. Archer takes it for granted that Germany anxiously wanted a war with England.

The military party undoubtedly did; but Great Britain's declaration of war was so unexpected it caused the greatest consternation in Germany. One may regard the German Government as extremely naïve in this matter, but undoubtedly it was most painfully surprised. Emperor William had, as C. H. Norman has proved, some reason to believe that England would re-

main neutral. In 1900–01 he had prevented a European coalition against England to oblige her to make peace with the South African republics upon favourable terms. He had shown his friendship for England by not receiving the Boers' deputies in Berlin, although they had been fêted everywhere in Europe; he had, as expressed in the *Daily Telegraph* interviw of 1908, refused Russia's and France's demand to join them in requesting Great Britain to end the Boer War.

Neither France nor England has ever dared deny this.

Exactly anxious to have a war with England the Kaiser evidently was not. And that he six years after the above-mentioned interview should have wished to become the enemy of the whole world would be hard to prove or to convince any thinking person of. His Government calculated badly, slipped in its reckoning, that is certain. But in 1914 Germany did not want a war with England, and the hatred of German people for England, which has found such repulsive expression in Germany, is due precisely to the surprise at meeting an unexpected enemy and a very strong one in Great Britain.

At the last moment German diplomacy did what it could to buy England's neutrality. It groped its way. The German Chancellor offered Sir Edward Goeschen to guarantee French territorial integrity if Germany succeeded in defeating France and Russia. Sir Ed-

ward Grey refused, as Germany was not willing to guarantee the integrity of the French colonies.

Prince Lichnowsky, German ambassador in London, then asked if England would remain neutral if Germany did not violate Belgian neutrality. This promise Sir Edward Grey did not wish to make; he wished to have his hands free. ("I did not think we could give a promise of neutrality on that condition alone.") Would he promise to remain neutral if Germany agreed to guarantee the integrity of both France and her colonies? No, he would not bind himself. Would he then give the condition upon which England would remain neutral? No.

("The ambassador pressed me as to whether I could formulate conditions upon which we would remain neutral. He even suggested that the integrity of France and her colonies might be guaranteed. I said I felt obliged to refuse definitely any promise to remain neutral on similar terms, and that I could only say we must keep our hands free.")

Since then Sir Edward Grey has said that Prince Lichnowsky certainly exceeded his authority in suggesting these conditions, but this is only because the English minister is convinced of Germany's irresistible desire to fight Russia, France, England, and Belgium.

As I have said before, and as any one can see, Germany was prepared for a German-Russian war, in case this would result from Austria's attack on Serbia. She

would have left France (and therefore Belgium) in peace if France had promised to remain neutral in such a war. But France, as it is known, was bound to help Russia. This alliance which had been prepared for a generation, whose wisdom the future must judge, is at any rate one of the reasons why half a dozen million men spend their days in miserably trying to kill one another.

The English minister of foreign affairs — without the knowledge of Parliament — promised to help France in the event of a European war. Because of the new-born sympathy for France public opinion in England would undoubtedly have approved of this policy, if it had known of it. But it surely would not have approved the obligation placed upon England if it had known that this obligation was incurred by the relation of France to Russia — the only power that had nothing to lose by a war. Russia's human material is so great that the loss of human life in the event of war could be regarded as an incident. Besides a conservative government would be strengthened if the war awakened national passions and led to victory.

If informed of the political situation, public opinion in Great Britain would have realised that the very origin of the war promised no good for the liberty of humanity or for human happiness. Even in the event of the Allies' victory, it heralded an immense increase of Russia's power, and meant victory for a form of government opposed to England's. For the Russian

people, who, as human beings, have won Europe's heart, this victory meant no betterment.

## III

I do not believe my excellent opponent, Mr. Archer, can despise Prussian militarism more than I. It has its excuse in the obligation to guard two frontiers, one between Germany and Russia and the other between Germany and France. Its excuse in regard to France is that the French have taken Berlin half a dozen times, while the Germans have been in France two or three times only. Its spirit of caste and its insolence is repellant. But it is scarcely worse than militarism of other countries. Under the Dreyfus affair Europe, even England, saw with a certain anxiety the aspect which even French militarism could take. And as for Russia's militarism, the idyllic and charming Russians who have fascinated my honourable friend, Mr. Wells, just as they have conquered all our hearts, they slaughtered in cold blood in 1900 the whole Chinese population of Blagovestchenk and its environs. The Cossacks tied the Chinese together by their pig tails and threw them into the river, or thrust them out upon rafts that could not hold them. When the women threw their babes on the shore and prayed that at least the children might be spared, the little ones were pierced by bayonets.

"Nothing worse than the mass murder at Blagovestchenk has ever been committed by the Turks," wrote

Mr. F. E. Smith, the former English censor of the press, in 1907, precisely the year when England and Russia agreed on the treaty that undermined Persia's independence.

The same English correspondent has verified the story which the *Times'* correspondent at that time told of Japanese militarism. November 21, 1894, the Japanese army stormed Port Arthur and for four days in succession the soldiers slaughtered civilians, men and women and children, with the utmost barbarity. "The day was employed in murder and plunder from dawn till nightfall, by means of every thinkable torture, until the city became a ghastly horror which will be remembered with a shiver by every survivor till the last day of his life."

Militarism's national colour is of little importance. It is pretty much the same all over. I wish Mr. Archer would read the lecture held in Hamburg January 30, 1915, by Dr. C. Vöhringer from German Africa. He would see how the inhabitants of Cameroun, about fifty women and men, surprised by the declaration of war, suffered when English officers locked them in under the command of blacks who maltreated them. They were packed together in a small room, without retiring rooms and suffered from hunger and thirst. The prisoners in Duala were locked in a ship's cabin so small that they all had to remain standing. On a transport to Lagos the prisoners suffered from thirst. If they asked

for water it was brought them in spittoons and a British officer said: "It doesn't matter whether the German swine get water or not." They were not allowed water for washing all the way from Lagos to England.

Such is *English militarism.* Will it be — is it — much better than Prussian when the English people's national feeling, as that of other nations, is stirred to insanity?

## IV

Would that Mr. Archer and other prominent men in and outside of Great Britain could be induced to cease their everlasting discussion as to who is responsible for the war and upon whom the punishment should fall and would concentrate their efforts on solving the only real and vital question, that of finding a way out of this hell! To it may truly be applied the words of Macbeth:

> *"Oh, horror, horror, horror! Tongue nor heart*
> *Cannot conceive nor name thee!"*

The belligerents are insatiable. At the Conference of Paris they decided to continue the commercial war when the clash of arms comes to an end. Insanity seems fated to reign forever.

The war must end with an agreement, and as the real nature of the war is economic, this agreement must be economic. England as a nation of free trade has shown the world the way. A tariff agreement will be

unavoidable and both parties will have to make concessions. Greater trade freedom must be sought until *universal free trade* is reached at last.

A man from the country which has suffered most from the war, a Belgian business man from Charleroi, M. Henri Lambert, points to the only sane solution. He claims that the only wise and far-sighted policy regarding a tariff agreement is to be *just* and to allow even the enemy to live. There can be no lasting improvement in European conditions unless the party seeking peace is forced to abandon or at least greatly reduce its protective tariff. For this, complete and equitable reciprocity should be granted. That instrument of economical competition called "dumping," for which the English so blame the Germans, can only be done away with by the "open door."

A tariff agreement will be necessary even in the improbable event of one party winning an overwhelming victory, for which a dozen millions or more men will have to be sacrificed on the battlefields and in the homes.

Suppose that the victor, as suggested at the Economic Conference in Paris, should decide to discriminate against the defeated by means of unequal tariffs. The conquered nation would thereby be dragged down to a lower level, and humanity would be set back to the days when whole nations were enslaved.

The vanquished, under such pressure, would have but one passion: revenge and redress! They would turn to

account every disagreement between the victors, and within fifty years would succeed in breaking loose. Political alliances do not last half a century.

Europe's peace in the future depends on free trade. Free trade, as Cobden has said, is the greatest peacemaker. It seems, moreover, the only possible peacemaker.

In ancient times people put the eyes out of the old horses set to drag the mill stones round and round. In the same way to-day, the unfortunate nations of Europe, blinded to reality, under the yoke, believing themselves free, grind the mills of war.

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